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Language and Soteriology: Vedāntic and Buddhist

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LANGUAGE AND SOTERIOLOGY: VEDĀNTIC AND BUDDHIST

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pṛcchāmi tvā paramantam pṛthivyāḥ, pṛcchāmi yatra bhuvanasya nābhiḥ/

pṛcchāmi tvā vṛṣṇo aśvasya retaḥ, pṛcchāmi vācaḥ paramam vyoma//

(*Ṛg Veda* I. 164. 34)

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ABSTRACT: The body of this work consists of the study of the notion of language in Rg Veda, Śaṅkara, Pāli Suttas, and Nāgārjuna with perhaps the main emphasis of the work falling on the two philosophers mentioned. In each instance I have attempted to come to an understanding of the notion of language in terms of its relation to what might be described as "ultimate concerns", or in other words, those concerns which have as their horizons the endpoints of metaphysical inquiry and soteriological endeavour. The main scheme that I work towards is a heuristic one, revolving around the bifurcation of language conceived of as "divine" in the Brahmanical traditions studied, and as "diabolical" in the Buddhist ones. However, this distinction, since it is an heuristic one, should not be pressed too far.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The problem of 'Truth', or of 'Reality',—of discovering and understanding 'things' as they really are, without concession[1]—may well be said to entail the only pure and earnest philosophical inquiry. In fact, it seems that any and every question one might possibly entertain presupposes the archtypical force of this necessary disposition. However, while we have here the essential dynamism of the philosophical enterprise, it is language that provides it with requisite shape and content, that is, with articulation and meaning. Thus, I think that it is not too much of a generality to say that what we have come to call 'philosophy' revolves, though perhaps sometimes in a rather diluted manner, around the following great axial question: "What is Reality(Truth)?".

Both factors (language and the will/desire to uncover) are simultaneously crucial to man's confrontation with the given world, and it is out of such confrontation, on an isolated and personal level, that bare thought crystalises into systematic philosophy. In this thesis I have chosen to concentrate on two of these systematic philosophies, those of Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna, with an effort to examine their respective conceptualizations of

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1 Here I am simply stressing the fact that in appropriating such an undertaking one is not dealing with 'half-way measures', nor aiming, once the end is reached, to grant or yield any sense of relativity whatsoever.

language and the relation of this language to what they hold to be the Absolute, i.e., the answer to the "Great Question".

Within the limits of the Indian Tradition[1], the end result of—the actual 'answer' to—the "Great Question", has always[2] been synonymous with the fulfillment of soteriological concerns, namely, 'spiritual' emancipation (mukti, mokṣa, nirvāṇa). This is nowhere more true than in the recorded thought of India's two greatest exponents of 'Transcendentalist'[3] philosophy: Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna. Therefore, in our effort to investigate the manner in which these two eminent thinkers deliberated upon the "Great Question", we must constantly bear in mind the inseperability of inquiry and soteriology in the Indian Philosophical Tradition.

It must be pointed out that the manner in which Nāgārjuna and Śaṅkara manage to answer the "Great Question" is only obtusely a focus of this thesis, more accurately we are concerned with a question within the one whose answer, according to Śaṅkara and Nāgarjuna, vitiates all other questions[4]. This question which specifically concerns us might be formulated as follows: "What, ac-

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1 I use the word "Tradition" here in the broadest possible sense, a sense that is more inclusive than exclusive, taking into account all manifest and latent, cultural and philosophical, outgrowths of presuppositions basic to that complex.

2 Excepting of course the Cārvākas(Materialists) whose short-lived contribution to the Indian Tradition was little more than negligible.

3 A provisional epithet, in the sense that neither of these philosophers would consider themselves to be so.

4. For Nāgārjuna the "Great Question" and its answer even vitiate themselves.

cording to Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna, is the relationship of the articulation (shape) and meaning (content) of the 'Great Question' to its own answer?", or in other words, "What is the relationship between language and Absolute Reality according to each of these two philosophers?"

Bearing this scope into our investigation, I think that we will notice that the problems to be faced here are slightly different from those that might be brought about by a similar investigation directd at some of the decidedly Realistic branches of Indian Philosophy (e.g., Jaina, Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika), wherein, as expected, one would encounter metaphysical convictions that catered to, and encouraged, a structured-analytic approach to the question of linguistic signification[1]. For example, the questions to be asked here are of the following variety: a) "If the two systems we are dealing with are truly 'Trancendentalisms', and therefore can be said to regard given existence as necessarily lacking genuine reality, then what can language—which seems to bear

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1 T. R. V. Murti in his "Welcome Adress" to the Second All-India Seminar, as found on pages ix-x of Language and Reality (& Other Papers), (Proceedings of the Second All-India Seminar held at Banaras Hindu University), Ed., J. L. Mehta, Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, B.H.U., Varanasi, 1968, puts forth a similar bifurcation in the Indian Philosophy of Language:

> From the Indian point of view the problem of language has a two-fold aspect. One is the philosophical tradition according to which Language is of Divine origin. The other approach is that of structural analysis, where Indian Grammarians have made important cotributions.

But this cursory stratification is quite vague, and does not account for language as conceived in the Pāli suttas, or Nāgārjuna, for example.

a more natural affinity to the mundane sphere[1]—be said to represent or connote?"; b) "What can we make out to be the definitive 'role' of language in the grand scheme of these philosophies?"; c) On the other hand, it might additionally be asked whether the import of adjectives and phrases put forward by these two philosophers with the apparent intention of predicating the Absolute conforms to their accepted notions of what the applications and capacities of language truly are? Of course, the above key questions can only be persued once a fundamental understanding of the nature of Absolute Reality and the nature of Language in each of these two schools of thought has been achieved.

Turning now to a few methodological considerations, I may state that historically I will be dealing with the Śaṅkara of the Bhāṣyas on the prasthānatrayī, and the Nāgārjuna of the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā and Vigrahavyāvartanī. The former presents little

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1 That is, within these two Absolutisms language is clearly this side of Reality. T. R. V. Murti expresses this point aptly on page 153 of his major work The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1960, when he states the following:

> Language is pre-eminently an instrument to express the empirical. This is not only natural, but pragmatically the more important. Very often philosophy, especially absolutism, has to convey through the usual symbols what admittedly cannot be symbolised. This it does by superimposing an induced or artifical signification on conventional words. Many of the ambiguities and apparent inconsistencies in the Mādhyamika or other absolutist systems are traceable to this necessary predicament. They are ever trying to convey through language and concepts things for which language was not intended as an instrument of expression.

This then, is the general problematic context for our investigation of the relationship between Language and Reality in Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna.

problem as definite historical figure and author of the three Bhāṣyas attributed to him, Nāgārjuna, however, is a more enigmatic individual in respect to both his historical existence and especially the works that we may say were authored by him[1]. To minimize this problem, I have restricted myself to speaking of Nāgārjuna as the author of those two philosphical works most confidently attributed to him by modern scholars—Mūlamadhyamakakārikās and Vigrahavyāvartanī[2].

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1 Richard H. Robinson in his Early Mādhyamika in India and China, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1967, (pp. 21-26), provides a concise synopsis of both traditional (Indian and Chinese) and scholarly opinions on the date of Nāgārjuna, however, he does not seem to side with any of these interpretations, nor does he explicitly offer a view of his own, therefore, we can do little more than side with Winternitz when he states on p. 341 of his A History of Indian Literature, University of Calcutta, 1927, that, "It is a good working hypothesis, though nothing more, that he lived in the latter half of the 2nd century A.D.". As to the works which we might consider to have been composed by Nāgārjuna, Robinson, on p. 27 of the work referred to above, states the following:

> ...if we define Nāgārjuna as the author of the Middle Stanzas, then there are no grounds for impeaching the authenticity of the other four works [Yukti sastika, Śūnyatā-saptati, Vigraha-vyāvartanī, and Vaidalyā] listed by Tāranātha, as their content agrees with that of the Middle Stanzas. In addition, the Ratnāvalī, Catuḥstava, Pratītya-samutpāda-hṛdaya, and Bhava-saṁkrānti śāstra... are attested by quotations in Candrakīrti....

However, due to the availability of translations and the amount of secondary work done on the Kārikās and Vigraha-vyāvartanī I have decided to concentrate almost solely upon them.

2 This of course does not mean that allusions, where appropriate, will not be made to some of the works mentioned in the preceding note, such as Ratnāvalī and Catuḥ-stava, or even more dubious works such as Mahāyāna-viṁśaka and Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra.

I must point out that the force behind this exercise is one of 'thinking through' rather than one of arranging or classifying according to historical or conceptual typologies, although it is a simple fact of scholarship that one cannot proceed to apply oneself to the former without displaying a firm foundation in the latter. It may also be mentioned at this point that the burden of our difficulty in talking about the 'metaphysical convictions' of these two philosophers falls generously on the side of the Nāgārjuna. In other words, while in Śaṅkara's Advaita we find an express and lucid ontology, something that we can "sink our teeth into", Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika demonstrates a 'raw dialectic' whose singular function in terms of epistemology or ontology is by no means clear[1].

Besides chapters dealing specifically with the above two figures, I have also incuded two chapters which attempt investigate the concept of language in the earliest stages of Brahmanical and Buddhist thought, with an effort to understand the nature and the type of base that Śaṅkara's and Nāgārjuna's thoughts about language necessarily assume. Most importantly, the aim of this work is not comparative, the only comparison

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1 Robinson briefly comments upon this on p. 4 of his <u>Early Madhyamika</u>..., stating that:

> The dominant problem for the European discussants has remained the Mādhyamika ontology--whether this system acknowledges an absolute; whether it is Monism, Relativism, Nihilism, Scepticism, Absolutism; whether it has an ontology at all or confines itself to epistemology.

that is intended is implicit in the structure of the chapters themselves.

On the other hand, one may well ask if this work is at all a thesis in the most well known use of the word, that is, in the sense of a thematic presentation and working-through of a central proposition or problem towards the establishment of a justified and gratifying conclusion. Clearly this work does not have such an outward appearance. It does not attempt to ride on the shoulders of a single and persistent question. This has followed, I think, mainly from the somewhat overambitious scope of the undertaking, which compelled me to deal with each of the four major segments of the exercise contextually, or, as almost self-contained investigations of instances (though not instances in the sense of a necessary continuity and developement) of dealing with the concept of language within Indian Thought. To do otherwise, namely, to venture into outright Comparative Philosophy, would involve an intensive investigation of the assumptions and presuppositions basic to that enterprise and their specific relevancy to our questions and instances here. It is something that might follow after the initial mapping-out that comprises the body of this work.[1]

Lastly, we may adress ourselves to the question "Why

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1 Again, I have pointed to such possibilities of comparison in the overall arrangement and structure of the chapters themselves. Similarly, both Epilogues serve the double function of being what might be called a surrogate conclusion, and of bringing closer or linking together those chapters which obviously demand this.

should one at all bother oneself with the study of the concept of language in any sense of the word?". Language is the constant medium of one's own efforts to understand, to give shape to a hermeneutic of existence, in the sense that all that man has to work with in order to strive for an answer to the "Great Question" is already given to him and stands in relation to him as a re-presentation in language (words, concepts, symbols, the actual form of thought). In respect to this T. R. V. Murti makes the following important observation[1]:

> The philosophy of language is an end in itself. It is not cultivated as a means to acquire greater proficiency in the use of language. Through philosophy, Speech becomes conscious of itself. It awakens to its role as the creator and matrix of Word and Meaning which encompass the entire universe of things.

It might be said that man as a thinking being, stands in the wake of the Absolute, but one must also realise that the very fibre of this wake is language itself.

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1 T. R. V. Murti. "Some Comments on the Philosophy of Language in the Indian Context", JIP., #2, pp. 321-331. The quotation appears on p. 325.

HOR	History of Religions (Chicago)
HOS	Harvard Oriental Series (Cambridge, Mass.)
IA	Indian Antiquary
IIJ	Indo-Iranian Journal
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly (Calcutta)
IPA	Indian Philosophical Annual (Madras)
IU	Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad (See TPU)
IUB	Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society (New Haven)
JCV	Jha Commemoration Volume ed., S. N. Dasgupta
JIP	Journal of Indian Philosophy (Dordrecht)
KU	Kaṭha Upaniṣad (See TPU)
KUB	Kaṭha Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
KeU	Kena Upaniṣad (See TPU)
KeUB	Kena Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
KS	Kindred Sayings (Saṁyutta Nikāya) tr., C. A. F. Davids and F. L. Woodward
M	Mahāyānaviṁśaka, ed., and tr., Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya
MLS	Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima Nikāya) tr., I. B. Horner
MMK	Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (As contained in Pr)
MN	Majjhima Nikāya (PTS) ed., V. Trenckner and Lord Chalmers
MU	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (See TPU)
MUB	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
MaU	Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (See TPU)

ABBREVIATIONS

(For detais on the primary source material, consult "Works Considered", below pp. 171f.)

ABORI — *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* (Poona)

ALB — *Adyar Library Bulletin* (Adyar, Madras)

AU — *Aitereya Upaniṣad* (See *TPU*)

AUB — *Aitereya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

BDCRI — *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute* (Poona)

BG — *Bhagavadgītā* (As contained in *BGB*)

BGB — *Bhagavadgītā Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, *ed.*, D. V. Gokhale

BS — *Brahmasūtras* (As contained in BSB)

BSB — *Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*, *ed.*, Nārāyan Rām Āchārya

BSOAS — *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* (London)

BU — *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (See *TPU*)

BUB — *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

BV — *Bharatiya Vidya* (Bombay)

CU — *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (See *TPU*)

CUB — *Chāndogya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

D — *Dialogues of the Buddha*, *tr.*, T. W. Rhys Davids and C. A. F. Rhys Davids.

DN — *Dīgha Nikāya*, (*PTS*) *ed.*, T. W. Rhys Davids and J. E. Carpenter

GS — *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Aṅguttara Nikāya)* *tr.*, F. L. Woodward and E. M. Hare

MaUB — *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

NS — *Niraupamyastava ed.* and *tr.*, G. Tucci (See Tucci, "Two Hymns...")

PEW — *Philsophy East and West* (Honolulu)

PS — *Paramārthastava ed.* and *tr.*, G. Tucci (See Tucci, "Two Hymns...")

PTS — Pali Text Society, London

PTSICO — *Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth International Congress of Orientalists ed.*, R. N. Dandekar

PU — *Praśna Upaniṣad* (See *TPU*)

PUB — *Praśna Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

Pr — *Prasannapadā ed.*, P. L. Vaidya (See Vaidya, *Madhyamakaśāstra...*)

R — *Ratnāvalī ed.* and *tr.*, G. Tucci

RV — *Ṛg Veda ed.*, Śrī Pāda Śarmā

SS — *Collected Papers of Professor S. S. Suryana Rayana Sastri*

TPU — *Ten Principal Upanishads with Śāṅkarabhāṣya*, no editor given, Motilal Banarsidass, 1964

TT — *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta ed.*, Mervyn Sprung

TU — *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (See *TPU*)

TUB — *Taittirīya Upaniṣad Śāṅkara Bhāṣya* (See *TPU*)

VB — *Vedānta and Buddhism (And Other Papers) ed.*, J. L. Mehta

VIJ — *Vishveshwaranand Indological Journal*

VV — *Vigrahavyāvartanī ed.*, E. H. Johnston and A. Kunst

ZDMG — *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

TRANSLATIONS CONSULTED

(My translations of Sanskrit passages employed in the body of this thesis have been based upon the following existing translations. For details see below pp. 171ff.)

Chapter I

Rg Veda

Geldner, K. F., Der Rig-Veda: Aus Dem Sanskrit Ins Deutsche Und Mit Einem Laufenden Kommentar Versehen

Griffith, Ralph T, The Hymns of the Rgveda

Chapter II

Bhagavadgītā etc.

Edgerton, F., The Bhagavad Gītā

Sastri, A. Mahadeva, The Bhagavad-Gītā with the Commentary of Srī Saṅkarāchārya

Brahmasūtrā etc.

Apte, V. M., Brahma-Sūtra Shānkara-Bhāshya

Gambhirananda, Swami, Brahma-Sūtra Bhāsya of Śaṅkarācārya

Upanisads etc.

Jha, Ganganatha, The Chāndogyopanisad (A treatise on Vedānta Philsophy translated into English with the Commentary of Saṅkara)

Gambhirananda, Swami, Eight Upanisads With the Commentary of Saṅkarāchārya, Two Vols.

Madhavananda, Swami, The Brhadāranyaka Upanisad With the Commentary of Saṅkarāchārya

Radhakrishnan, S., The Principal Upanisads

Chapter IV

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

Inada, Kenneth K., Nāgārjuna (A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay)

Streng, F., "Fundamentals of the Middle Way" as contained on pp. 183-220 of the same author's Emptiness

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with Prasannapadā

Chapt. I and XXV, Stcherbatsky, Th., The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa, pp. 79-212

Chapts. II-IV, VI-IX, XI, XXIII, XXIV, XXVI, XXVII, May, Jacques, Candrakīrti Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti

Chapts. V, X, XII-XVI, Schayer, Stanislaw, Ausgewählte Kapitel Aus der Prasanapadā

Chapts. XVIII-XXII, De Jong, J. W., Cinq Chapitres de la Prasannapadā

Vigrahavyāvartanī

Bhattacharya, Kamaleswar, "The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna (Translation of the 'Vigrahavyavārtanī' from the original Sanskrit with Introduction and Notes)"

Mookerjee, S., on pp. 7-41 of his "The Absolutist's Standpoint in Logic"

Streng, F., "Averting the Arguments" on pp. 221-227 of his Emptiness

Divine Speech: *Vāc* in the *Ṛg Veda*

In attempting to investigate a concept, or a specific idea-cluster, taken from the *Ṛg Veda*, one must first of all realize with what one is dealing. The inital question should always be, "*What* exactly is the *Ṛg Veda*, and *how* can we go about understanding it?". The structure of such a question, of course, is basic to any sort of hermeneutical endeavour, yet the patience of briefly going over the major points in this case might prevent us from plunging haphazardly into quite a bewildering cosmos.

First of all, we are dealing with a self-contained text of over one-thousand enigmatic, poetical *sūktas* (hymns) belonging to various chronological strata[1] and frequently liable to interpolations. It is the oldest available Indian Text and contains a complex of mythological[2], ritualistic[3], and what might tentatively

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1 The whole of the tenth Book and portions of the first are considered to be the most recent with the Family Books (II-VII) being the earliest. See Louis Renou, *Vedic India* (trans. Philip Spratt), Indological Book House, Delhi-Varanasi, 1971, pp. 3-4. I mention this in passing since we are not concerned with the historical developement of the concept of *vāc* in *Ṛg Veda*, but with capturing a more integral assessment of it, with a view to seeing what relationship it might have to Śaṅkara's idea of speech.

2 A. A. Macdonell's, *Vedic Mythology*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1974, being the most concise presentation, and Abel Bergaigne's *Vedic Religion*, IV Vols., (trans. V. G. Paranjpe) Aryasamskrti Prakashan, Poona, 1969-1973, being perhaps the most informative.

3 See Renou, *Vedic India*, pp. 93- 125.

be termed philosophical, preoccupations. It, of course, plays a pre-eminent role, both historically and traditionally in the Indian āstika schools of thought[1]. These are well known generalities and I make them only to emphasize two points: a) there is little, if anything, that can be called systematic or "clear-cut" in the conceptual content of the Ṛg Veda; b) that despite this, a more than significant segment of the Indian philosphical and religious[2] Tradition looks back on it as a body of revealed, and therefore foundational, truth.

If we now turn to the how aspect of our initial problem, we will quite naturally find that it is a constant function of our limitations, that is, if we can come to terms with the limits of our investigative tools in respect to this relatively inaccessible text, and constantly keep these limits in mind, then we will have established the methodological consciousness necessary to understand the Ṛg Veda—in effect, this is what method in Religious Studies entails, an understanding of one's limitations. Most importantly, I think that one should allow the text itself to serve as the overruling guide, even more so when the text is as self-

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1 Śaṅkara, who holds the most interest for us, says of the Ṛg Veda that it is "...the source of all knowledge...." (sarva jñānākara) at BSB. I. 1. 3.

2 Though I do not mean to imply, in any sense, that these two aspects of the Indian Tradition are as divergent as they have come to be regarded in the West. An interesting article that attempts to show that what is felt to be philosophy in Indian thought is not as exclusive a concept as it is in the West is J. M. Freedman's, "Myth and Metaphysics in Indian Thought", in The Monist, Vol. 50, 1966, pp. 517-527.

contained[1] as the Rg Veda, and keep the 'reading into' the text of one's own presuppositions[2] down to a minimum.

Though the Rg Veda itself may be our most important tool, our most copious one is, of course, the vast body of secondary literature available on the topic. These, I think, may be roughly divided into two camps, the historians and the speculators. The former might be called the 'technocrats' of Vedic studies, their concerns are basically within the realms of philology and comparative mythology[3], the latter are themselves self-styled poet-visionaries who delight in exploring the extensions and subtleties of symbolism to which the Rg Vedic hymns easily lend themselves[4].

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1 By 'self-contained' I mean that the Rg Veda seems to stand by itself without presupposing any other text, while the rest of the Saṁhitās, Brāhmanas, etc. presuppose the Rg Veda. I might also add that the most successful studies of the Rg Veda seem to have been those who treated the work in this manner, such as H. Oldenberg, Vedaforschung, Stuttgart, 1960, A. Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, and Louis Renou, Études Védiques et Pāninéennes, 17 Vols., Paris, 1955-1966. For the treatment of Rg Veda as a text by these and other scholars see Antonio T. de Nicolas, Four-Dimensional Man: The Philosophical Methodology of the Rigveda, Dharmaram College, Bangalore, 1971, pp. 12-13.

2 The presuppositions may be traditional ones such as make distinct, East-West ways of thinking and, which weigh most heavily on comparative religious exercises, or they may be historical-conceptual presuppositions within a tradition, which tend to anachronistically read into terminology what is inappropriate.

3 Extending from the extant Nirukta of Yāska (c. sixth cent. B.C.) to 19th century European scholarship, the vogue being exemplified by such scholars as Rosen, Roth, Kuhn, Müller, Aufrecht, Ludwig, Grassman, etc., up to Gonda in this century. For a treatment of these scholars, and a brief history of this type of concern with the Rg Veda consult R. N. Dandekar's booklet, Vedic Religion and Mythology (A Survey of the Work of Some Western Scholars), University of Poona, Poona, 1965.

4 In scholastic circles this group seems to be in the minority, though if we include Sāyana in this group, and I think we must, we will find that some scholars who are only borderline

Of course, I don't intend this to be a hard and fast dictum for categorising any writer's work on the Ṛg Veda, but rather, I only wish to point out what seems to me to be a general polarity in the history of Vedic scholarship.[1] For example, there are writers such as Bergaigne, Geldner, Brown, and perhaps Sāyaṇa and Gonda, who seem to fall within a grey area between the two approaches.

In any event, how are we to reconcile this polarity, or perhaps better, how are we to make a value judgement upon its two aspects? First of all they cannot be mutually exclusive of each other, though each implicitly seems to recognize and respect the limits of the other[2], for if that were the case Vedic studies would have quite likely stagnated long ago. Neither, do I

'technocrats' such as Wilson, and Geldner, rely heavily on Sāyaṇa for their understanding of Ṛg Veda. Among the leading figuires of this style of interpretation we may list Sri Aurobindo, On the Veda, Pondicherry, 1964; V. S. Agrawala, Vision in Long Darkness, Varanasi, 1963; Marlya Falk, Nama-Rupa and Dharma-Rupa, University of Calcutta, 1943; Stella Kramrisch, "The Triple Structure of Creation in the Ṛg Veda", HOR, Vol. II, # 1, pp. 140-175, and Vol. II, #2, pp. 256-285, might with reservations also be included in this group. Agrawala encapsulates the general stance of this approach when he states on p. 1 of his "The Traditional Approach to Vedic Interpretation", PTSICO, Vol. III, Pt. 1, pp. 1-13:

> The traditional approach takes into account the multiplicity of evidence and rather insists that the total evidence should be admitted into the forum of Vedic interpretation and nothing should be ignored. It is not a question of one's convenience but all out necessity to deal with the totality of the evidence as presented by the tradition.

1 In fact, is this not the basic polarity found in Religious Studies in general?

2 Neither seems to take up what the other does in earnest. As an instance we might submit the words of F. B. J. Kuiper, when after a rather uproductive philological investigation of the word vācārambhaṇam ("Vācārambhaṇam(II)", IIJ, Vol. II, pp. 306-310, p. 310), he states "In this matter the last word rests with the philosophers.".

believe that one can properly do both simultaneously, if only for the reason that one seems to have so much more at stake in his enterprise than the other, and perhaps here is the point at which a value judgement can begin.

The people who are well within the Tradition (or as perhaps is the case with Sri Aurobindo, at least proximate to it) such as Yāska[1], Sāyaṇa, and Agrawala, or for that matter any Indian Vedic scholar even though he may not be a 'speculator' in terms of working with Ṛg Veda, necessarily has more at stake than a Western scholar in the same area, since the former is dealing with and exploring what, for him, is a sacred and revealed text. When, however, I imply that the philologists and other historians of Religion seem to have less at stake in studying the Ṛg Veda, I mean to say that the product of their efforts does not exhaust (though it may lay the mechanical groundwork for understanding it) the response to the question "What is the conciousness of the way things are, as it is presented in the Ṛg Veda?", or in other words, "What were the things that were regarded as being the important things in the Vedic cosmos?". The stake, of course, is that stake for which thought is best suited, the pursuit of understanding, of knowledge[1]--Religious Studies should be the last Discipline to have to offer an apologetic for such an endeavour.

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1 Such a knowledge develops out of out of an intimacy with the subject (here a text) one is studying, over and above the precision one might attain in dealing with historical or conceptual data relating to it. Mere existential pretention is a common commodity, this is not what I hope to imply here, I only wish to point out that thinking, even about religious phenomena, is a very earnest enterprise.

It seems, therefore, that a reconcilliation (that is, a complete overlaping of interests) between the two poles of Vedic studies is not at all what is called for, but again, it should be kept in mind that this does not mean that each one should ingnore the efforts and findings of the other. The task of this section then, is not a philological or predominantly historical one, it is rather an attempt to delineate the major aspects of the idea-complex that makes up what is called vāc in the Ṛg Veda. I also hope that all of this will show that the basic attitude towards language in Ṛg Veda was to look upon it as a positive and integral entity, in fact, as something divine.

i.

Any one who has studied, or even read a fair portion, of these puzzling hymns will easily recognize that Power is the comprehensive message of the Text and that manipulation of Power is the central concern of those individuals represented in it. It will also be seen that this Power seems to manifests itself in two essential ways: a) as violent Power and b) as regulating Power.

We encounter the former in references to the dynamism of naturalistic or meteorological phenomena[1] such as the Maruts who as dwellers within the storm turn over the well of the cloud by their ojas or might (I. 85. 10-11; V. 59. 8; V. 83. 6; etc.),

1 Bergaigne's Vedic Religion, is throughout emphatic in calling our attention to the importance of naturalistic consciousness on behalf of Ṛgvedic man, and rightly so.

or Vata, the Wind, who has the voice of thunder (stanayannasya ghoṣa, X. 168. 1), stirs up the sea (IX. 84. 4) as well as the flames of Agni (VI. 6. 3). Similarly Agni as the terrestrial fire scorches and eats the forests (I. 143. 5; VI. 3. 4; 6. 3), devours the sacrificial offering (II. 1. 13-14; III. 21. 1-2; 28. 1-6), is even called all devouring (visvādan, VIII. 44. 26), and in his atmospheric form Agni is lightning[1]. This same sense of violence is preponderant in the mythic or epic battle motifs such as the struggle of the devas against the asuras, one aspect of which is the cosmogonic Indra/Vṛtra encounter (I. 80. 11; II. 11. 9-10; VI. 17. 9; X. 89. 7; etc.)[2]. Psychologically, we may call attention to the frenzied intoxicating Power produced by the draught of Soma which inspires Indra into battle (II. 15. 1; Vi. 27. 1-2; 47. 1-2; VII. 22. 2; VIII. 81. 6) and which also, as Gonda[3] implies, may be conected with the inspired vibrant speech (vipā) of the kavis (poets) (cf. 8. 65. 10).

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1 For the different forms of Agni consult Macdonnel, Vedic Mythology, pp. 88-100 and especially Kramrisch, "Triple Structure ....", pp. 160ff.

2 For information on the deva/asura struggle consult A. K. Coomeraswamy's "Angels and Titans: An Essay in Vedic Ontology", JAOS, Vol. 55, 1935, pp. 373-419, and two articles by W. Norman Brown, "The Creation Myth of the Ṛgveda", JAOS, Vol. 62, 1942, pp. 85-98 (which also concisely discusses the major aspects of the Indra/Vṛta myth) and "Theories of Creation in the Ṛgveda", JAOS, Vol. 85, 1965, pp. 23-34.

3 See Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, Mouton & Co., The Hague, 1963, pp. 36-40. On p. 38, Gonda states the following:

> Soma is not moved by mere Zurede, poems or oratory, but by the "vibrant" speech (vipā, 9, 3, 2, cf. 9, 65, 12) of a poet who was imbued with the divine spirit... and the soma juices which are mindful of, or aim at, inward excitation (vipaścitah) are in 9, 22, 3 stated to have completely reached or penetrated (vy ānaśuh) the visions (dhiyaḥ) with ecstasy or excitment (vipā).

As for regulating Power, the chief Vedic concepts to be associated with this are, rta, dharman, dhāman, and vrata[1]. The sense of all of them is more a cosmic one than a moral one, and if any one dominates the others it is, as Bergaigne[2] points out, rta since it is found to often govern the genitive of the others (I. 43. 9; 65. 3; VII. 36. 5; IX. 7. 1; 110. 4; X. 124. 3). This regulating Power also has its naturalistic expressions[3]: the year is symbolised by the twelve-spoked wheel of rta (I. 164. 11); Sūrya, the Sun, is said to travel between Heaven and Earth according to the dharman (I. 160. 1); Uṣas, the Dawn, appears daily according to the regulation of rta (I. 123. 8-9).

In terms of the mythic conflict, the victory of Indra over Vṛtra can easily be taken to represent the triumph of regulating power (rta) over chaotic forces (anrta), as might some of the other heroic accomplishments of that same god, such as the settling of the quaking mountains (II. 12. 2; X. 44. 8) or the setting free of the cows imprisoned by Vala (I. 11. 15; II.

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1 As according to Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. III, pp. 215-231. The root senses of the words are: dhāman, from √dhā to place, institute or establish; dharman, from √dhr to support, hold, or maintain; rta, from √r to adapt; and the problematic vrata which is either from √vr to envelope or cover, or √vr to to choose or desire. According to these root senses then, dhāman would be the power which establishes (the dhātr founds the sacrifice, IX. 10. 3), dharman would be the power which sustains (the dhartr maintains the law of the sacrifice II. 23. 17); rta would be that which fits or adapts things; vrata would mean either that which encloses something or else something akin to will.

2 Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. III. pp. 226-227.

3 See Bergaigne, Vedic Relgion, Vol III. pp. 231-232 for further examples.

12. 3; 14. 3). In this same vein, the gods are thought of as being receptacles of Power in the sense of vitality which is called ojas (II. 22. 3; VIII. 61. 2; X. 153. 2; etc.)[1] and in the sense of ability or efficacy, termed māyā (III. 53. 8; V. 63. 3-4; VI. 47. 8)[2].

Finally, the sacrifice is perhaps the most important arena for this regulating Power[3], for the efficacy of the sacrifice not only draws upon the regulating Power but, and more importantly, it maintains and replenishes the cosmic order, for the gods, who are regarded as being more proximate to ṛta, thrive on the sacrifice (I. 164. 50; III. 32. 12; X. 90. 16). The efficacy of the sacrifice also had a more pragmatic force to it,, since it was also an attempt to tap into, and acquire, the individual (material) and cosmic benifits of this regulating oder[4].

Thus, this sets the stage for our further investigation. The Ṛgvedic cosmos was a dynamic power-flux in which in which man's best and proper function was to be a manipulator rather than the manipulated, and this, of course, meant that he had to understand the variety of Powers that confron-

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1 See Gonda, Some Observations on the Relations between "Gods" and "Powers" in the Veda, a propos of the Phrase Sunuḥ Sahasaḥ, Mouton & Co., The Hague, 1957

2 See Gonda, Change and Continuity in Indian Religion, Mouton & Co., the Hague, 1965, pp. 167-169.

3 See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol III., pp. 233ff.

4 Thus there is hardly a hymn in the Rg Veda in which the speaker does not ask to be granted some sort of favour by the deity he addresses, whether it be wealth(I. 5. 9), health(I. 93. 7), safety(III. 32. 14), destruction of the enemy(X. 42. 7), cows and horses(I. 29. 2), and so on.

fronted him. He obtained such an understanding (or at least the possibility of such an understanding) from the visionary of his time, namely the *ṛṣi*, who as *kavi* (poet) was able to give outward expression to the power of his vision, and to the power of what he saw.

Thus the attempt to understand *vāc* must be built upon this groundwork, that is, in treating of *vāc* we must always remember that in its most rudimentary sense *vāc* is a Power in the midst of a cosmic vortex of Powers[1].

ii.

The first differential aspect of *vāc* that I should like to consider, is exactly its power to render expressible[2] the consumingly internal[3] vision of the *ṛṣi*. In doing so, we will find that we are dealing with the question as to what the nature of the

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1 I do not mean to imply the the Ṛgvedic *Weltanschauung* was ultimately pluralistic, in fact, the *Ṛg Veda* if it can be said to make a single statement it is one of implicit monism. This is what I would say allows, and, for that matter, encourages the solubility of images and symbols so characteristic of the *Ṛg Veda*. It surfaces explicitly in such late and well-known hymns as the "Asya Vāmasya Sūkta" (I. 164), the "Puruṣa Sūkta" (X. 90), and the "Nāsadiya Sūkta" (X. 129).

2 It must be noticed that this does not automatically mean understandable, and the history of Vedic scholarship will attest to this.

3 That is to say, the √*dhī* cognates which are most specifically associated with *ṛṣi*-vision in the *Ṛg Veda* all convey an inwardly functioning process (*dhīḥ*, 'thought', *dhītiḥ* 'visionary insight', *dhīra*, 'wisdom'; see Gonda, *Vision...*, throughout).

actual composition of the Ṛgvedic *sūktas* involved. That is to say, were the *ṛṣis* *sūktadraṣṭāraḥ* (seers of the hymns) or *sūktakartāraḥ* (makers of the hymns)[1]? Upon entering the *ṛṣi*[2], does *vāc* supply the possibility of externalizing an already existent vision, or does it in fact create that vision, or finally does it do both of these things in different aspects of its functioning? Our initial task then, is to shed some light upon these questions by investigating some of the major concepts connected with the visionary abilities of the *ṛṣi*.

In the light of this, let us first of all say something about the concept of *ṛṣi*[3]. This term is applied in the *Ṛg Veda* to specific individuals (i.e., individuals possessing proper names such as Dīrghatamas, etc.), it is used of the gods (Agni, I. 31. 1; 66. 4; III. 21. 3; Indra, VIII. 6. 41; 16. 7; Soma, VIII. 79. 1; IX. 96. 6; 107. 7), and mainly as a general term signifying one who has the powers of a *ṛṣi* (VII. 28. 2; X. 89. 16). As for the characteristic abilities of the *ṛṣi* we find these at VIII. 59. 6[4], where it states that Indra and Varuṇa gave to the *ṛṣis*, in the beginning, intuitive wisdom (*manīṣā*), "thought expressed in words"[5]

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1 I borrow this terminology from V. G. Rahurkar, "The Word Ṛṣi in the Veda", BDCRI, Vol. 18, 1957, pp. 55-57.

2 As at I. 164. 37: *...vāco aśnuve bhāgamasyāḥ*. Cf. IV. 58. 3.

3 Rahurkar, "The Word Ṛṣi...", provides the various etymologies of the word from the *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* (II.9) up to Grassman, only his conclusion should concern us here: "Whatever, however, be the correct etymology of the word, the concept, *ṛṣi* has all along been taken to include ideas relating to poetic and prophetic vision, super-sensual knowledge, righteousness and ecstacy." (p. 57).

4 *Indrāvaruṇā yadṛṣibhyo manīṣāṁ vāco matiṁ śrutamadattamagre.*

5 Following Gonda, *Vision*, p. 41, on this difficult term.

(vāco mati), and revelation (śruta)[1]. I feel that these three things can be taken as the essential elements of vāc as it resides within the ṛṣi, and the fact that vāc does indeed reside within the ṛṣi, and so mark him apart from other men, can be learnt from the poetic verses of X. 71. 3-4: "3 With sacrifice the trace of Vāk they followed, and found her harbouring within the Ṛṣis./ .... 4 One man hath ne'er seen Vāk, and yet he seeth: one man hath hearing but hath never heard her./ But to another hath she shown her beauty as a fond well-dressed woman to her husband."[2].

Let us then consider each of these three elements in a more isolated fashion. The first, manīṣā, I would take to denote the whole internal[3] vision-complex denoted by the semantic-field of dhī, manīṣā, mati[4]. Though generally, there does not seem to

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1 We also encouter descriptions of the visionary and transcendental character of the ṛṣis in the Nirukta (I. 20) where Yāska states that the ṛṣiś are bearers of that which is directly revealed (sākṣātkṛtadharmāna ṛṣayaḥ....), literally placed before the eyes, and at Vākyapadīya I. 139 we find that the vision of the ṛṣis is based on Ultimate Reality (tattva), (ṛṣīnām darsanam yacca tattve kiñcidavasthitam....).

2 I supply Griffith's translation (The Hymns of the Ṛgveda, Edited by J. L. Shastri, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1973) since it captures the poetic exuberance of the sūkta. Vāc here is personified as a godess, see below p. 35 .

3 By the word "internal" I do not mean to imply that there is a critical distinction, consisistently expressed throughout the Ṛg Veda, between what might be called introspection and the epistemological speculation of looking outwards, and one does not even appear to begin until what are considered to be rather late verses such as I. 164. 37: na vi jānāmi yadivedamasmi....; and X. 129. 6-7, with its speculations concerning the cosmogony.

4 This, of course, follows Gonda, Vision..., p. 13.

be any broad or exacting difference between each of these components[1], a clue to the subtle difference between the first and second may be gleaned from RV I. 61. 2[2], where it is said that they (probably the rsis) smear (marjayanta)[3] their dhiyah (visions) with (their) heart (hrdā), mind (manasā), and manīsā (wisdom). Gonda's inference with respect to this verse seems quite proper when he concludes that, "[manīsā] as compared to the immediate vision denoted by dhīh is in a sense seconary referring to a process which may become operative when the flash of intuition has arisen."[4]. Along these lines, dhīh could be explained as the ini-

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1 Gonda, Vision..., p. 13, is clear on this point, stating:

> I for one am inclined to adopt the hypothesis that generally speaking these words on the one hand retain a definite - though often not easily definable - "central meaning" or semantic nucleus which they also have in "non-technical" or otherwise different contexts, and on the other denote what would appear to us to be complex ideas from different points of view, whilst emphasizing different aspects, different stages of development, different functions, different connotations.

Among these technical usages, an important and fairly common one, and one which we may briefly mention here, is that of the end product of this visionary or mental power, often translated by "hymn, poem, etc." (See, S. A. Upadhyaya's two papers, "The Word Vip in the Rgveda", BV, Vol. 27, 1967, pp. 109-114, and "The Word Manman in the Rgveda", BV, Vol. 28, 1968, pp. 88-93, for examples). In respect to the use of dhīh in exactly this manner, Gonda (Vision..., pp. 133-134) is quick to emphasize the fact that, such translations as "hymn, etc." do not convey all the implications of the term (cf. RV VI. 21. 1). Thus even when "hymn" is meant, the whole emphasis of the term is on its dynamic visionary aspect.

2 Indrāya hrdā manasā manīsā pratnāya patye dhiyo marjayanta.

3 Gonda, Vision... p. 54, and p. 278, translates it as "they polish....", Griffith, Hymns..., as " they have decked...".

4 Gonda, Vision..., p. 54.

tial fact of vision, or, in other words, the essential raw material of the ṛṣi-vision, and manīṣā as the ensuing 'dwelling upon' or processing of the raw power of that vision, until it is refi- into the power of distilled wisdom[1], but yet not exactly discursive (that being the province of mati, see below).

We find dhi- specifically connected with vāc at X. 71. 2, where the visionaries create vāc by their mental capacity (...dhīrā manasā vācamakrata.)[2] like men passing corn-meal through a sieve (cf. X. 111. 1). This general reference to the creation of vāc by the visionary could be interpreted as simultaneously referring to manifestation of speech as the hymn, that is, in its physically perceptible form (viz. the speakable quarter, ...turīyaṁ vāco manuṣyā vadanti, RV I. 164. 45) and to the reciprocal empowerment of vāc, in almost a sense of cyclical conservation of energy, by the ṛṣis' who proclaim those visions which first entered them on behalf of that same vāc.

Similarly, manīṣā is connected with vāc at IV. 5. 3[3], in which Agni is said to have spoken (vocat) the manīṣā which is like the invisible (or secret, apagūlha) track of the cow, and this appears even more striking when we consider the fact that in

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1 However, this should not be taken to mean that manīṣā is in any sense superior to dhī, for if anything the dhī is the most immediate of the lot.

2 Cf. I. 161. 7, where the Ṛbhus fashion a cow from the cow hide by their dhīti (power of vision), and V. 45. 6, where the Mother is said to have been able to throw open the stalls of the cows on account of dhī. For the association of cow with vāc see below pp. - .

3 padaṁ na gorapagūlhaṁ vividvānagnirmahyaṁ predu vocanmanīṣām. Agni is further associated with manīṣā at IV. 6. 1, and IV. 11. 2.

III. 55. 1, we discover that the aksara (the imperishable syllable, see below pp.27-8) is born in the track of the cow (...jajñe aksaram pade goh). Thus manisa, or the wisdom applied to inspired vision, seems to be connected with the mysterious or invisible nature of vāc, the power that enables the secret aspects of vāc to enter the hymn and be communicated.

At this point we can emphasize that this idea of manīsā is quite often taken to be concerned with, or disclose knowledge of, a mysterious and transcendental kind. For example at X. 81. 4,[1] the ones who possess manīsā are commanded to inquire, by means of their mental faculties (manasā), where Viśvakarman stood while supporting the world, and at IX. 68. 6[2], the same type of people know the form of the Pleasant One (Soma) and when the eagle brought the Soma plant from the distance. Similarly the manīsin knows the four divisions of speech at I. 164. 45,[3] and by the manīsā of the kavi (poet-sage), searching in the heart, discovered the bond of sat (the existent) in asat (the non-existent) at X. 129. 4[4]. As yet there does not seem to be anything that would explicitly indicate that we are dealing with rsi-vision in its discursive or expressible form[5].

1 manīsino manasā prcchatedu tadyadadhyatisthadbhūvanāni dhārayan.

2 mandrasya rūpam vividurmanīsinah śyeno yadandho abharatparāvatah.

3 catvāri vākparimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmanā ye manīsinah.

4 sato bandhumasati niravindanhrdi pratīsyā kavyo manīsā.

5 Even when manīsā is used more generally as "hymn, etc."(see above, p. 13 n. 1) the emphasis is not on its being a discernable piece of communication, but on its being the eventual result of transcendental wisdom.

The recognition of the need for such expressibility is not wanting in the _Ṛgveda_, for at X. 111. 1[1] the ones who possess _manīṣā_ are called upon to bring it forth to the same degree as the thoughts (_mati_) of men, and it is not surprising that the ability to do this should come from the _mati_ of the _ṛṣi_ himself, as at X. 64. 15, where the ones possessing _manīṣā_ are said to repeatedly contrive (_avīvaśanta_) their voices by means of their _mati_[2]. Thus _mati_ (thought) seems to be a step further removed from either _dhī_ or _manīṣā_ in the context of _ṛṣi_-vision.

In this way we pass into the field of the second component of _vāc_ presented by Indra and Varuṇa to the _ṛṣi_ (see, VII. 59. 6, above pp. 11-12), namely, the "_vāco matiṁ_". It occurs once more in the _Ṛgveda_ at I. 143. 1[3], and I include Gonda's translation: "I offer a rather powerful and a new product of inspiration to Agni, an 'ausgedachte Rede' (Geldner) to the Son of victorious power."[4]. The term is probably best taken as a "genetive of apposition or explication", such as the example which Gonda provides in a different place[5]: "In 9, 97, 34 the phrase _ṛtasya dhītim_ is followed by _brahmaṇo manīṣām_, neither

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1 _manīṣiṇaḥ pra bharadhvaṁ manīṣāṁ yathāyathā matayaḥ santi nṛṇām._

2 _...bṛhadavīvaśanta matibhirmanīṣiṇaḥ._

3 _pra tavyasīṁ navyasīṁ dhītimagnaye vāco matiṁ sahasaḥ sūnave bhare._

4 Gonda, _Vision..._, p. 198. Geldner's "ausgedachte Rede" could be rendered by 'speech formulated by thought'.

5 Gonda, _Vision..._, p. 52, citing, Renou, _Grammaire sanscrite_, (Paris, 1930), p. 303.

(with Geldner) 'den Gedanken der heligen Rede' nor (with Luders) 'das Denken des Brahman', but rather 'the inspired thought manifesting brahman'.". Thus, the translation of vāco matim would be something to the effect of 'thought which manifests speech', that is, the mental capacity of the ṛṣi to render his vision expressible.

The final endowment given the ṛṣi is śruta. Generally, it occurs throughout the Ṛg Veda in the non-technical sense of fame (i.e., that which has been heard about someone) and is most often used in connection with Indra (I. 55. 8; II. 20. 6; IV. 30. 2; X. 22. 1-2; etc.). Even the phrase 'famed ṛṣi' (śruta-ṛṣim) appears at X. 47. 3. In our particular context however, and this seems to be the only time that it is used in such a way in the Ṛg Veda, it is taken to mean 'tradition'[1] in the sense of an accumulation and transmission of those ṛṣi-visions. So while vāc is the source of its own concretization, it is also the source of its own preservation.

But, after having shown how vision and speech (vāc) are connected in terms of the ṛṣi, we are still left with the question as to whether the ṛṣi was a 'seer' or 'maker' of the hymns. (see above, p. 11). Roughly, we may associate the term ṛṣi with

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1 Griffith, (Hymns of the Ṛgveda) gives "revelation", Gonda, Vision..., p. 41 gives "oral revelations or tradition" (cf. p. 211 of that work), Geldner, Der Rig-Veda, Part II, HOS Vol. 34, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1951, gives "Gelehrsamkeit" or "learned tradition". The meaning is perhaps the same as Śruti in the later Indian Tradition, or the earliest sense of śābda-pramāṇa. There might also be a play on the word śruta as fame in the sense that the fame of the ṛṣis is that they are possesed of the power to transmit and preserve their own visions, that is create the tradition (śruta). Sruta then, would be the form of vāc most removed from the immediacy of the original flash of vision (dhī).

'seer' and the term kavi[1] with 'maker', in relation to our problem.

I think we have seen that the ṛṣis are kavis in the sense that they render some internal vision expressible, that is, manifest it by some sort of intellectual activity (mati), but I also think that this should be seen as only the visible tip of the great visionary iceberg of immediate experience.[2] It is for this reason, I feel, that the exact opposite of etymological precision

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1 See Gonda, Vision..., pp. 44-51. This association of kavi with 'maker' is intended in a very loose sense, since it seems to be used in the Ṛg Veda mainly to signify someone who is in tune to secret knowledge. Thus P. R. Ray, in his "The Concept of Kavya in the Ṛgveda", IA, Vol. III, 1969, pp. 177-180, cocludes (on p. 180) the following about kāvya (that which relates to or qualifies the kavi):

> ...kāvya in the first instance means effective secret wisdom with mystic power possessed mainly by the Gods. Kāvya as composition is secondary in its nature though in the later literature it assumes the primary meaning of the word.

We therefore find in the Ṛg Veda that the kavis are the ones who know the secret places (vidvāṁsaḥ padā guhyāni..., X. 53. 10) and that Varuṇa who knows the secret names of the cows is called a kavi (...ya usrāṇāmapīcyā veda nāmāni guhyā, VII. 41. 5). Agni is especially associated with the kavi at I. 12. 6; II. 6. 7; IV. 11. 3; V. 21. 3; etc., and because of his kavya Agni who is a kavi is said to know all things (...kaviḥ kāvyenāsi viśvavit, X. 91. 3). The idea of the kavis as composers does however, seem to appear at X. 114. 5, where we find that the quivering kavis form the Bird (Agni, Vac?) who is One by their words in many ways (suparṇaṁ viprāh kavayo vacobhirekaṁ santam bahudhā kalpayanti).

2 J. A. B. van Buitenen, makes a more sweeping statement along similar lines on p. 211 of his "Notes on Akṣara", BDCRI, Vol. 17, #3, 1955, pp. 204-215, when he states that:

> ...[the] mentality behind the speculations on Vāc: it is not mere abstract theorizing to reduce the Universe to its order, the order to the sacred Word and the Word to its metere and ultimate unit of syllable, but the immediate experience of the composing poet himself.

and economy of words is what characterizes Vedic composition[1]. Thus when the rṣis are primarily sūktadraṣṭāraḥ (the seers of the hymns) and when they are spoken of as being composers (sūkta-kartāraḥ), it is not in the sense of actually manufacturing the hymns[2], but merely in the sense of transmitting and transforming what was an already existing vision into an accessible form, with the exceptional skill of retaining the essence of that vision. Vāc serves as the source, groundwork, medium, and often the object of all this activity.

iii.

Soma[3] is regarded in the Ṛg Veda to inspire and give rise to vision in a number of places. At IX. 107. 18[4] we find that the wise (kavi) Soma, while generating mati, resounds among the gods,

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1 Or else how could the fluidity and solubility of the symbolism in the Ṛg Veda be possible? Though J. A. B. van Buitenen, in his "Vācārambhaṇam Reconsidered", IIJ Vol. 2, 1958, pp. 295-305, makes the following statement with Upaniṣadic thought in mind, I think it is applicable to the Ṛg Veda:

> ...etymological exactitude was hardly a prime concern of these thinkers who in their ādeśas or upaniṣads summed up as many connections as the terms themselves could possibly provide in their sounds and meanings.

2 Thus the term apauruṣeya (non-human) is ascribed to the Veda at Mīmāṃsā Sūtra I. 8. 27, and BSB I. 2. 2. , but also cf. RV I. 130.6.

3 That is the juice of the intoxicating plant. Nirukta XI. 2, gives oṣadhiḥ somaḥ sunoteḥ, yadenamabhiṣuṇvanti, i.e., Soma is a plant and derived from su, it is that which is repeatedly pressed.

4 ...janayanmatiṁ kaviḥ somo deveṣu raṇyati.

and at IX. 96. 5[1] that the Soma which flows is that which gives birth to the thoughts (mati), as well as the Sky and the Earth. Similarly, the power to apprehend by dhī and by manas is closely associated to the apprehension of a thing by means of Soma, for I. 139. 2[2] states that the speakers of the hymn saw the golden (thing) in the seats (of the gods) by means of dhī, manas, their own eyes, and the eyes peculiar to Soma (cf. I. 87. 5). Soma therefore acts upon and flows through the visionary faculties of the ṛṣis providing an intoxication that exhilerates the consciousness and that is not detrimental but sought after and cultivated for its prosimity to the secret of the functioning of the cosmos.

Just as Soma gives power to and impels the visionary faculties, so also is it found to perform the same activity in relation to vāc. For example at VI. 47. 3[3] we find that when the Soma is drunk it exites (udiyarti) vāc and awakes the willing manīṣā, and at IX. 96. 7[4], that Soma has stirred up (prāvīvipat) like a river the wave of vāc, the songs, and the manīṣā. It is perhaps for this reason that Soma is called the lord or husband of vāc (patiṁ vācaḥ, IX. 26. 4) and the one who begets the vāc of the kavis (vaco jantuḥ kavīnām, IX. 67. 13)[5]. So we see that

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1 somaḥ pavate janitā matīnāṁ janitā divo janitā pṛthivyāḥ.

2 ...sadmasvapaśyāma hiraṇyayam. dhībhiścana manasā svebhirakṣabhiḥ somasya svebhirakṣābhiḥ.

3 ayaṁ me pīta udiyarti vācamayaṁ manīṣāmuśatīmajīgaḥ.

4 prāvīvipadvāca urmiṁ na sindhurgiraḥ somaḥ pavamāno manīṣāḥ. Cf., I. 87. 5, somasya jihvā pra jigāti čakṣasā (the tongue stirs because of the eye of Soma).

5 Cf., IX. 106. 12, where it is said that Soma, creating vāc while being filtered, flows on (punāno vācaṁ janayannasiṣyadat.)

in its association with Soma, vāc reveals its exhilerating side, an aspect that results from a partaking in the intoxicating draught of divine power.

Again, we discover that this impowering is mutual, for while Soma impels vāc, vāc causes Soma to increase or prosper, as at I. 91. 11[1] where the knowers of vāc are said to do this by their songs, and at IX. 17. 4[2] the uktha (recitation of verse) in the sacrifice is said to do the same. In fact, at IX. 97. 2[3] we see that vāc actually fashions Soma. Therefore, if anything can be predicated of vāc in its connection with Soma, it is that vāc is a positive power, in other words a power that one seeks to be raised up to, and that to effect this 'raising up' one draws on other powers which are in turn created and given power to by vāc.

Soma not only exites and stirs up vāc but also the Waters (āpaḥ), as for example at IX. 62. 26[4] and IX. 107. 21[5], which according to the Nighaṇṭu (I.12)[6] is a term synonymous with words direc-

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1 soma gīrbhiṣṭva vayaṁ vardhayāmo vacovidaḥ.

2 ukthairyajñeṣu vardhate.

3 takṣadyadī manaso venato vāk....

4 tvaṁ samudriyā apo 'griyo vāca īrayan, "You (Soma), the foremost of vāc, stirring the waters flowing into the ocean...." .

5 mṛjyamānaḥ suhastya samudre vācaminvasi, "Being purified, you (Soma) the skilled one, invigorate vāc in the middle of the ocean.", cf., IX. 12. 6. Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. II, p. 27 , says of these verses that they: "...contain at least an allusion to Soma=lightning preceding the voice of thunder and letting flow the waters of heaven.".

6 Here one-hundred synonyms of udaka (water) appear, co-incidentally following fifty-seven synonyms of vāc at I.11. See Lakshman Sarup, The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1967.

tly belonging to the sphere of vāc, such as "akṣaram" and "nāma". Āpaḥ (the Waters)[1] stand for the terrestrial waters in the form of the rivers, the floods, the oceans, the water in plants, etc., and for the atmospheric waters in the form of the waters latent in the clouds and that which pours down to earth in the form of rain. Thus we find that the foremost (hymns of the ṛṣis) descend into the sea (V. 44. 9)[2] and more strikingly at X. 125. 7[3] Vāk herself reveals that her place of origin is in the ocean (samudra). Finally, we also find the root √kṣar "to flow", exemplifying the essence of the waters[4], used in connection with words belonging to the semantic field of vāc (e.g., of gīr at I. 181. 7 and of dhī at VIII. 50. 4).

In turning to the association of "Cow" with vac we can easily recognise that its symbolism intersects with that of the Waters in their mutually shared image of the cloud; the "Cow" holds within itself the milk of life just as the cloud contains within it the life-giving waters[5]. So we find that Vāk is called

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1 See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. ppl 251-261 for details. Nirukta IX.26, gives apaḥ from √āp "to obtain", but does not explain it further, perhaps it is intended in the sense that water is that which is to be obtained.

2 samudramāsāmava tasthe agrimā(ḥ).... Not with Griffith "... abideth in the sea...", but with Geldner "...kam hinab zum Meere...". The subject 'hymns' is obtained from the context of the preceeding verse.

3 ...mama yonirapsvantaḥ samudre. The Goddess Vāk is speaking.

4 Compare this with akṣara "the unflowing" used also as "the syllable", below p.216.

5 See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. pp. 259-261, on p. 259 he states: "...the most frequent representation given to waters terrestrial as well as celestial, is that of the cow.". Also consult J. R. Joshi, "The Cow in the Veda", IA, Vol. 5, #4, 1971, pp. 212-219, especially for Brāhmaṇic references.

'the cow geilding milk and food' (...duhānā dhenurvāk..., VIII. 100. 11, cf., VIII. 101. 16). Such images illustrate again, that speech to the Vedic consciousness, was a valuable thing, a thing worth getting, for what could be more valuable to him than the means of sustinance?

To explore the direct relationship between "Cow" and "Word" in the Ṛg Veda, let us delve a bit more deeply into a single hymn, namely, I. 164. 41.[1] It reads as follows:

> gaurīrmimāya salilāni takṣatyekapadī dvipadī sā catuṣpadī/
> aṣṭāpadī navapadī babhūvuṣī sahasrākṣarā parame vyoman//

> The buffalo cow lowed, fashioning the flood waters; becoming one-footed, two-footed, four-footed, eight-footed, nine footed she is the thousand-syllabled one in the highest heaven.

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1 The asya vāmasyasūkta (I. 164) is perhaps the most complex, intriguing, and informative single hymn in Ṛg Veda. Its importance seems to have been recognized by a significant number of scholars who have produced studies of the whole, or portions, of it. The most notable among these are C. Kunhan Raja's, Asya Vāmasya Hymn(The Riddle of the Universe), Ganesh & Co, Madras, 1956, which provides quite a literal translation along with the Devanāgarī of Sāyaṇabhāṣyam and Ātmānandabhāṣyam to it (the same author also provides more exegetical notes to this hymn in his, Poet-Philophers of the Ṛgveda(Vedic and Pre-Vedic), Ganesh & Co, Madras, 1963, pp. 1-49); V. S. Agrawala's Vision in Long Darkness, Varanasi, 1963, which contains a rather free and poetic translation, but is sometimes laboured in its cross-references; W. Norman Brown's "Agni, Sun, Sacrifice and Vāc: A Sacerdotal Ode by Dīrghatamas (Rig Veda 1.164)", JAOS, 88, pp. 199-218, which methodologically and historically is more informative than the two other translations. In reference to this specific verse two papers might be mentioned, the first "Gaurī", Indological Sudies (In Honor of W. Norman Brown), Ed. by Ernest Bender, American Oriental Society, New Haven Conn., 1962, pp. 1-7, is merely a reprint of the chapter pertaining to this verse from Agrawala's above mentioned book, and also V. Swaminathan's "Asya Vāmasya Sūkta(RV I.164): A New Interpretation of Verse 41", VIJ, Vol 16, 1958, pp. 294-305, which draws its interpretation from the Bhāṣyas, Brāhmaṇas, and even Vaiṣṇava texts (Lakṣmītantra).

Here we may perhaps isolate three motifs: a) the association of the cow with the waters; b) vāc in symbolised by the "lowing"; and c) the differentiation (one... two..., etc.) of this complex (cow-waters-vāc), which seems to be used in the sense of accounting for the manifold nature through which that complex somehow develops or evolves. We have already referred to the relation of the cows to the Waters above, gaura the male aspect of our term is a well-known appellation of Indra (I. 16. 5; VII. 98. 1; VIII. 4. 3; 45. 24; etc.) while the female gaurī is given as a name of vāc at Nighaṇṭu I.11[1].

As for the "lowing" (mimāya), the Nirukta in exegeting RV I. 164. 26 and 28 (which appear at Nirukta XI. 43 and 42 respectively), in the last of which the verb "mī" recurs, explains it as referring to the speech of the middle region (vāgeṣā mādhyamikā), that is, the atmospheric speech or thunder, with the cows representing clouds(cf. I. 164. 9)[2]. At III. 53. 15[3] Sasarparī, which Sāyaṇa takes as an epithet of Vāk, lows loudly. Further, at III.

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1 A brief mention might be made of the fact that the gaurīs are said to drink the Soma juice at I. 84. 10 (cf. IX. 12. 3). Of greater interest is the fact that in the Upaniṣads as well, vāc is referred to as a cow: "One should meditate upon vāc as the cow." (vācaṃ dhenumupāsīta.... BU, V. 8. 1, cf. Ch. U., I. 3. 7). Sankara(The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad with the Commentary of Śaṅkarācārya, trans. Swamī Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1975, p. 578) explains the phrase as follows: "Just as a cow secretes milk through her four teats for her calf to suck, so does this cow secrete... food for the gods etc. that is comparable to milk.".

2 This same interpretation seems applicable to III. 55. 13: anyasyā vatsaṃ rihatī mimāya kayā bhuvā ni dadhe dhenurūdhaḥ - "She lowed liking the other's calf, into which world has she deposited her udder?" (cf. X. 27. 4).

3 sasarparīramatiṃ bādhamānā bṛhanmimāya jamadagnidattā, "Sasarparī, the gift of the Jamadagi, lowed loudly, having dispelled the lack (amati)."

31. 6 the cows released by Saramā (the hound of Indra) are said to make a sound (_rava_)and this again, as interpreted by Bergaigne[1] is the sound the thunderbolt.

In turning to the subsequent differentiation of _gaurī_, we find that there have been many views as to what it conveys, from Yāska (_Nirukta_ XI. 40) to the _Lakṣmītantra_ (XVIII.30-36)[2]. Yāska's seems to be a straightforward cosmographic one:

> _ekapadī madhyamena, dvipadī madhyamena cādityena ca, catuṣpadī digbhiḥ, aṣṭāpadī digbhiścāvāntaradigbhiśca, navapadī digbhiścāvāntaradigbhiścādityena ca, sahasrākṣarā bahūdakā, parame vyavane._
>
> One-footed because of the atmosphere, two- because of the atmosphere and the sun, four... the four principal quarters, eight-... the four principal and the four intermediary quarters, nine- the eight quarters and the sun, thousand-syllabled [means] possessed of much water in the highest heaven.

In conjunction with his interpretation of _mimāya_ as thunder, which we referred to on the last page, Yāska seems to mean that _gaurī_ is the thunder that permeates all of the regions named. Sāyaṇa's exegesis differs only minimally, considering one-footed to mean in the cloud (_meghe_), two-footed in the cloud and atmosphere, and nine-footed to mean the eight quarters plus another quarter which is the sun. The real difference seems to come when Sāyaṇa refers to _sahasrākṣara_ as 'the unlimitted speech' (_aparimitavacano 'yam_), but otherwise Sāyaṇa too seems to think that the verse is concerned with the permeation of thunder through the various regions.

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1 See Bergaigne, _Vedic Religion_, Vol. II, pp. 324-325.

2 Again, V. Swaminathan, "_Asya Vāmasya..._", provides an excellent survey of all of these interpretations.

Sāyaṇa also encounters and interprets this verse in two other places, namely, Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa II. 4. 6, and Taittirīya Āraṇyaka I. 9, and he infuses both with his typically Advaita standpoint[1]. Following Swaminathan[2] let me present their significant details, since they illustrate the potential of the verse as being explained in terms of vāc.[3] In the former the evolution of gaurī proceeds as follows: 'one' - praṇava (OM); 'two' - vyāhṛtis (see Ch. U., II. 23, 3-4) and Sāvitrī; 'four' - the four Vedas; 'eight' - the six Vedāṅgas plus Purāṇas and Dharmaśāstras; 'nine' - as Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Pañcarātra, Pāśupata, Āyurveda, Dhanurveda and Gāndharveda; 'one-thousand' - various vidyās. In the latter Sāyaṇa interprets the various stages as referring metres having the appropriate number of feet. These however, need detain us no longer.

Before leaving I. 164. 41, we cannot overlook the fact that a new term has been introduced into our concern with the vāc-

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1 This, of course, is the well-known detriment of Sāyaṇa, however, this does not in any way render his commentary useless in understanding Ṛg Veda, for, besides being one of the few complete extant commentaries, it provides us with many clues and 'keys' to its interpretation which cannot be overlooked. Western scholarship on Ṛg Veda could not have begun without Sāyaṇa's work.

2 V. Swaminathan, "Asya Vāmasya...", p. 34.

3 In his commentary to I. 164. 41, Sāyaṇa gives the views of some other thinkers (kecidevamāhuh...) probably the Vyākaraṇa (Grammarian) which explain the differentiation of gaurī in the following manner: 'one' - as the one-support (ekapratisthānā) or OM (praṇavātmanā); 'two' - as the difference between noun and verb (suptiṅbheda); 'four' - because of the difference between noun, verb, preposition and particle (...upasarganipātabhedena); 'eight' - the eight nominal declensions (...astavibhakti...); 'nine' - those eight plus the indeclinable words as the ninth(sāvyayai(h) ...); 'one-thousand' as manifold or differentiated sound (anekadhvani).

complex, and that is aksara[1]. The word literally means 'the unflowing', 'that which is eternal', 'vāc reduced to its irreducible essence' (Jaim. Up. Br. I.1[2]), and in the Nighantu I. 11-12, it occurs in the list pertaining to vāc as well as being one of the names of udaka (water). We learn at III. 55. 1[3], that the aksara was born in the foot-print of the cow when the first dawns glimmered (ūsuh), again the cow most probably being vāc, and the import, that the aksara had its origin in the earliest times alongside vāc. In VI. 16. 35,[4] the aksara is identified with the womb

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1 See, J. A. B. van Buitenen's two articles: "Notes on Akṣara", BDCRI, Vol. 17. #3, 1953, pp. 204-215 and "Akṣara", JAOS, 79, 1956, pp. 176-187. In both he traces the development of aksara =syllable from the Rg Veda to aksara=OM=Brahman in the Upanisads. In terms of the Rg Veda he feels that aksara as it occurs there already transcends uttered speech ("Aksafa", p. 182), but that "It is not yet a particular syllable [such as OM] which is supreme: it is the Syllable as such which is the ultimate because it cannot be reduced further." ("Notes...", p. 213). Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I., p. 285, states that: "Literally the word aksara appears to have a sense analogous to that of amrta ... and appears to denote the inexhaustible essence of the celestial Word.". Oldenburg in his "akṣára, ákṣara im Rgveda", from his Kleine Schriften, Ed. by K. L. Sanert, Teil I., Weisbaden, 1967, pp. 293-295, is not willing to exclude the meaning of "Cow" in relation to it: "Weit übrigens entfernen wir uns mit der Bedeutung "Kuh" von der Bedeutung "Silbe" nicht; man weiss ja, welche Rolle die symbolische Parallelität von Kuh und heiligem Wort im Rv. spielt." (p. 294).

2 J. A. B. van Buitenen provides a translation of this passage, in which the Creator is progressively squeezing the essences out of the various classes of creation until he comes to the irreducible aksara, on p. 179 of his "Akṣara": "...he [the creator] could not take the juice of this akṣara; of this akṣara, OM, the Word came to be, for the Word is indeed OM. The juice of Word is Breath etc.". Thus having found this irreducible essence the creator can begin creation.

3 usasah purvā adha yadvyūsurmahadvi jajñe aksaram pade goh.

4 garbhe mātuh pituspitā vididyutāno. aksare/ sīdannrtasya yonimā.

of the Mother and associated with the source of rta (...rtasya yonimā) and at I. 164. 42[1] we discover that all things live upon that aksara which flows from her (gaurī's) ocean. Finally, at VII. 1. 14[2] Agni brings together the aksarā which has a thousand paths, which could perhaps be associated with the sahasrāksarā of I. 164. 41, and if so, could be taken to mean that Agni brings together the manifold quality of vāc into some form of a unified and even transcendent whole.

In summation, the attempt of this section has been to provide a glimpse of the intricacy of the Soma-waters-cow symbolism and to show the role that this plays within the vāc complex. If anything can be implied from this symbolism it is that it seems to be attempting to convey the knowledge of the rsi-vision in the form of a subtle allegory and metaphor, yet, this is not saying enough, since for the rsi, the underlying unity of these things in vāc was much more than symbolic it was actual.

iv.

Two things remain to be discussed, first the functioning power of vāc as the 'word' and second, the divine quality of vāc. The former can be dealt with in terms of three basic focii: a) the cosmogonic power of the word in the mythical rescue of the cows by Brhaspati; b) the power of vāc in terms of the sacrifice; c) the power of vāc as knowledge.

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1 tasyāh samudrā(h)... tatah ksaratyaksaram tadviśvamupa jīvati.

2 sahasrapāthā aksarā sameti.

Bṛhaspati's[1] feat is a well-known event and is often described in Ṛg Veda[2]; the cows which are freed, represent, of course, the waters, or in a more subtle form, vāc itself as the essence of the efficacious power of creation. However, the cows are not our specific interest here, instead we are concerned with the actual act itself and how Bṛhaspati managed to sunder that which was binding the cows. With this concern in mind, we find that in many places the instrument that causes the destruction of the mountain (adri, or Vala) is some type of sound (vāc), particularly that of thunder (rava). Thus at I. 62. 4[3] this is done by several types of sounds, a shrill cry (suṣṭubh), a cry (stubh), seven viprās (sapta vipraiḥ) and simply a noise (svara). In the same verse, Indra[4], the weilder of the thunderbolt, and the sound of thunder (rava) itself are said to accompany Bṛhaspati in his task, and similarly at X. 67. 6 Indra is said to destroy Vala by thunder (indro valaṁ rakṣitāraṁ dughānāṁ kareṇeva vi cakartā raveṇa, "By means of thunder, Indra split apart, as if with his hand, Vala, the guardian of the cattle.")[5]. Two more instances may be mentioned, at II. 24. 3,

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1 For descriptions of Bṛhaspati see Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, pp. 101-104, and Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. pp. 301-305.

2 As at, I. 62. 3-4; II. 23. 18; 24. 3-4; IV. 50. 5; VI. 73. 1-3; X. 67. 5-6; and the longest at X. 68. 4-9.

3 sa suṣṭubhā sa stubhā sapta vipraiḥ svareṇādriṁ svaryo navagvaiḥ.

4 Indra is associated with Bṛhaspati at II. 23. 18; 24. 2; VIII. 85. 15; and X. 67. 6.

5 Compare also IV. 50. 5, sa suṣṭubhā sa ṛkvatā gaṇena valaṁ ruroja phaligaṁ raveṇa - "He Bṛhaspati with a shrill cry, accompanied by a troop full of praise, shattered the theif (? following Geldner for phaligam) Vala by means of thunder.".

the whole thing is said to be acomplished by a brahman (prayer), and at X. 68. 6 by agnitapas (the heat of fire) which can loosely be taken to mean lightning and hence the thunder that accompanies it.

From this quick look at the Bṛhaspati/Vala myth, we can readily discern the important function of vāc as a cosmogonic power since it liberates the life-blood of creation, namely, the Waters (here symbolised by the cows)[1]. The binding force of Vala could not have been overcome without the shattering force of the thunder, or more metaphorically, the hymn (brahman). There is perhaps another interpretation that can accomodate the whole image without putting too much of a strain on it, and this would involve the notion that, as we have already found out, the cows not only symbolise the Waters but speech as well; keeping this in mind, what we have then is essentially a liberation of vāc by vāc. In order to understand what this could signify, I think we can look to the famous fourfold division of vāc at I. 164. 45[2] where we find that three of the divisions are concealed within the cave (guhā) and the

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1 Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. II, p. 284 informs us that this is also the case in the Indra/Vṛta myth when he states:

> The hymns which help Indra to deliver the waters are naturally identified in heaven with the sound of the waters themselves, IV. 22. 7, or, in the mythological language, with the voice of the cows and of the mountains, VII. 85. 5, that is to say with the noise of thunder.

Similarly at p. 326 of the same volume: "... the most characteristic feature of the Aṅgiras myth is exactly the eficacy of song in ensuring victory for Indra.".

2 catvāri vākparimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmaṇā ye manīṣinaḥ guhā trīṇi nihitā neṅgayanti turīyaṃ vāco manuṣyā vadanti:

Vāc has been divided into four quarters, the brāhmaṇas who are possessed of manīṣā know them; three of them, hidden within the cave, do not stir, humans speak the fourth.

fourth is spoken by man. Thus by making this juxtaposition, the Bṛhaspati myth could be looked upon as saying that the vāc which is immediately accessible to humans can be used to liberate, for their sake, the other three-quarters of speech hidden in the cave. In this way it could be a myth that exemplifies the purpose of the Ṛg Veda within the Vedic cosmos, saying, in other words that the physically perceptible portion of the Ṛg Veda might be used to break through to the concealed aspects of vāc.

In turning now to the sacrifice, we find that its connection with vāc in the Ṛg Veda is not explicitly stated anywhere in the text, though at X. 105. 8[1] we see that separately the sacrifice without prayer does not satisfy Indra, and similarly at VII. 26. 1[2] that those Soma juices which have been pressed without prayer do not satisfy Indra. Thus we cannot say that the Ṛg Veda is liturgical in its aim, in the sense that the Sāma or Yajur Veda might be, yet certain hymns read as if they were definitely intended for recitation in the context of the sacrifice[3]. Invocation of the gods must have quite clearly accompanied every sacrificial ritual, even the name of one type of priest, namely "hotṛ" (invoker or reciter), is from the root √hve "to call".

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1 nābrahmā yajña ṛdhagjoṣati tve.

2 na soma indramasuto mamāda nābrahmāno maghavānaṁ sutāsaḥ. Soma which has not been pressed does not satisfy bountiful Indra, neither do those Soma juices which are without prayers.

3 Such as I. 93; III. 28; 52; V. 82; X. 179, for further details see V. M. Apte's "Vedic Rituals" in The Cultural Heritage of India, Ramakrishna Mission, Inst. of Culture, Calcutta, 1970, Vol. I, pp. 234-263 (especially p. 235). On p. 244 he states in reference to Ṛg Veda that: "As a rule, ritual accompanies prayer with few exceptions....".

In the light of the above I think that it is not unsafe to say that sacrificial ritual in the Ṛg Veda was bound to some form of sacred speaking (vāc) whether in the form of a sūkta or an extract from one[1]. In effect vāc could be taken as that which makes ritual efficacious and hence the key power in terms of making Vedic man the manipulator (see above p. 9) of his cosmos. Thus perhaps the most important (in the sense that it enabled him to become the manipulator par excellence) knowledge for Vedic man to strive for was that which taught him the when and where of the employment of vāc in terms of the sacrifice (yajña)[2].

As for the last of the three powers of vāc, namely that of knowledge, this must be seen as the necessary implication of all that has gone before. By knowledge we do not mean isolated understanding, but that understanding which enables one to become a manipulator of the cosmos, in other words the knowledge of vāc in all its aspects and implications. This is how, I feel, that Marya Falk[3] can make the following statement concerning vāc-know-

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1 Of course this does not exclude the possibility of 'silence' playing just as important a role in a specific ritual circumstance, however the notions of tūṣṇim and upāṁśu as referring to such instances seem to be more properly relegated to the sphere of the Brāhmaṇas as emphasized in A. K. Coomaraswamy's "The Vedic Doctrine of Silence", Indian Culture, Vol. III, #4, April 1937, pp. 559-569. See also Louis Renou, "La Valeur du Silence dans le Culte Vedique", JAOS, Vol. 69, 1949, pp. 11-18.

2 I exclude from the sacrificial force of vāc as a magical spell to ward of various misfortunes as X. 161-163 (cf. I. 50. 11-13) seem to be, or defeat enemies in battle as at X. 23. 5 and X. 166. Such aspects of vāc, though they may be just as integral to the Ṛg vedic consciousness are not, I feel, of the same order as the ones with which we are concerned.

3 Marlya Falk, Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa, University of Calcutta, 1943, p. 16.

ledge in respect to the Vedic tradition: "Knowledge of 'names' is in fact knowledge of things, for according to this ancient Indian conception the real nāman is nowise the fortuitous designation, but the inherent, unsenuous essence of the thing to which it belongs.". This does not, I think, lose any of its truth when applied specifically to the Ṛg Veda, since to know the names of the cows, for example, is not to know some conventionally established set of designations which might be used isomorphically to represent certain objects existing in a universe appart from those designations, but to know the very essence of the cows, throughout all its symbolic contrivances and which enables all those contrivences, namely vāc. Thus we find at X. 71. 1, the first verse of a whole sūkta devoted to Jñānam (Knowledge) reading as follows:

> bṛhaspate prathamaṁ vācc agraṁ yatprairata nāmadheyaṁ dadhānāḥ/
> yadeṣāṁ śreṣṭhaṁ yadaripramāsītpreṇā tadeṣāṁ nihitaṁ guhāviḥ//
>
> O Bṛhaspati, when they (the ṛṣis[1]), assigning name, spoke out the earliest initial (utterances) of vāc, Of these things, that which was concealed within them, that which was the most splendid and spotless, was revealed by (their) affection.

What seems to be said is that by naming things the ṛṣis disclosed, or at least made possible the disclosure, of their essences.

One more thing should be pointed out in relation to this vāc-knowledge. Though the impetus of the acquisition of this vāc-knowledge may be schematically represented as going in the opposite direction to that force of vāc which manifests itself progressively

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1 Following Geldner: "Subjekt sind die ersten Ṛṣi's, die Stifter des Kultus.".

and cosmogonically downwards throughout creation[1], we must take care not to read into the Ṛg Veda the sense of jñāna in the Saṅkhyā-Yoga sense of enlightenment[2]. Knowing in the Ṛg Veda is knowing only in the sense of gaining the ability to become a manipulator in the cosmos, so that when one obtains 'enlightenment' in this manner one is still as much concerned with gaining cattle and defeating the enemy in battle as with knowing the mysteries of creation or the four divisions of speech[3].

We may now turn to the final concern of this section, that is, the divine quality of vāc, and in using the word "divine", I do not mean vāc only in the sense in which it is personified in the form of the godess Vāc but also, and perhaps more importantly, in the sense of the qualities which make vāc a 'thing to be cultivated' and even striven for, by those who lack it[4].

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1 First of all, my use of the word "acquisition" earlier on in the sentence should be taken as an emphasis of the fact that vāc is a thing which should be sought, rather than in the sens that one may systematically and on one's own behalf attain to it, in fact, instances such as I. 164. 37 and X. 125. 5 indicate just the opposite. As for the cosmogonic descent of vāc this can probably be best seen at I. 164. 41-42 (cf. VII. 76. 4; Mait. Up., VI.6; Tait. Up., I.5).

2 Marlya Falk, Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa, p. 7, seems to say something similar:

> ...already in the Ṛgvedic texts two forms of the descent of Vāc are distinguished, divergent in their modes and opposite in their effects: one is the cosmogonic event - the cosmic division ensuing upon the cosmig generation -, the other is the process of enlightenment....

However the impication here, as is too commonly the case with Falk, is far too Yogic.

3 We should not attempt to completely systemize the Ṛg Veda, just as we should not attempt to completely mythologize Śaṅkara.

4 The differnece between those who have access to vāc and those who do not can be seen from X. 71. 5-6.

There are two sūktas, X. 71 and X. 125, which describe the godess Vāc[1]. The major concern of the former seems to be the relationship betweeen being in possession of Vāc as some form of knowledge and not being so in possession of Vāc as exquisitely expressed in verse 4:

> uta tvah paśyanna dadarśa vācamuta tvah śrnvanna śrnotyenām/
> utò tvasmai tanvam vi sasre jāyeva patya uśatī suvāsāh//
>
> Both the one who is seeing has not seen Vāc, and the one who is hearing does not hear her. Yet she discloses herself to another like a longing, beautifully dressed wife to her husband.[2]

This, I think, offers us a glimpse of that precious divinity in which Vāc was held by those who were attuned to the essence of the Rg Veda. Such is also not wanting in hymn X. 125, for in verse 5 of that hymn we find Vāc herself saying: "That one which I love, him I make powerful, him I make a brahman, a rsi, him I make wise."[3]. However, it is in this latter hymn that we come across the actual grandeur of Vāc's divinity such as is evident in verses 7 and 8:

> aham suve pitaramasya mūrdhanmama yonirapsvantah samudre/
> tato vi tisthe bhuvanānu viśvotāmūm dyām varsmanopa sprśāmi//

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1 There does not appear to be much secondary source information on the godess Vāc as she presents herself in the Rg Veda. One may consult A. A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 124; F. D. K. Bosch's The Golden Germ, Mouton & Co., 1960, pp. 52 f.; pages 247-249 of Stella Kramrisch's "The Indian Great Godess", HOR, Vol. 14, #4, May 1975, pp. 235-265; and V. N. Misra's "Vāk Legends in the Brāhmana Literature", PTSICO, Vol. III. Pt. 1 pp. 109-118 the first few pages of which deal with Vāc in the Rg Veda.

2 This last part is also said of Usas (Dawn) at I. 124. 7.

3 yam kāmaye tamtamugram krnomi tam brahmānam tamrsim tam sumedhām.

<u>ahameva vāta iva pra vāmyārabhamānā bhuvanāni viśvā/</u>
<u>paro divā para enā pṛthivyaitāvatī mahinā saṁ babhūva//</u>

I created the father on the summit of this (universe), my origin (or source) is within the waters, in the ocean.
From that place I have also spread over all (you) existing creatures, with my forehead I touch yonder heaven.

I blow forth like the wind, clinging to (or entering) all existing things.
(Extending) beyond this earth, beyond the sky, I have become so great by my power.

Such is the majesty of the godess Vāc, and as it is, it helps us to understand why elsewhere (VII. 100. 10) she is referred to as Queen of the gods (<u>rāṣṭrī devānām...</u>).

Aside from this personified aspect, <u>vāc</u> can still be seen to have what might be called divine connotations about it. For example at IV. 1. 15[1], men are said to perform that famous deed which is usually associated with Bṛhaspati by divine speech (<u>vaco daivyaṁ</u>), and at X. 88. 8[2] we find that the speech of the hymn (<u>sūktavāk</u>) was the first thing created by the gods. Similarly the <u>brahman</u> (prayer or hymn) is said to be god given (<u>devatta</u>) at I. 37. 4[3] and such also is the implication concerning <u>arka</u> (hymn) at VII. 97. 5[4]. Among some of the other characteristics of <u>vāc</u> that contribute to

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1 <u>...naro vacasā daivyena vrajaṁ gomantamuśijo vi vavruḥ</u> - "...the eager men opened the cow pen full of cattle with the divine speech.".

2 <u>sūktavākaṁ prathamamādidagnimādiddhavirajanayanta devāḥ</u>, - "The gods first created the speech of the hymn, then Agni, then the oblation (<u>havis</u>).". Cf. X. 125. 3.

3 <u>devattaṁ brahma gāyata</u> - "Sing the god-given hymn.", this recurs at VIII. 32. 27.

4 <u>tamā no arkamamṛtāva juṣtamime dhāsuramṛtāsaḥ purājāḥ</u>, - "The first born immortal ones gave us the <u>arka</u>, this gave pleasure to the Immortal One.". Cf., VIII. 86. 2 and II. 34. 7.

its divine structure is the fact that vāc is regarded to be eternal (nitya) at VIII. 75. 6 and also that its abode is regarded to be in the highest heaven (parame vyoman) as at I. 164. 39 and 41 (cf. I. 164. 10 and 45). These then, are the explicit represtations of the divine element in which vāc resides, on top of these we can also place that implicit divinity which allows vāc to function as the axis of the Ṛgvedic cosmos, and this, we have tried to show throughout everything that has gone before.

Finally, the pervasive respect for this divinity of vāc during the Vedic age is most blatant in the fact that the Veda itself was only transmitted orally and not commited to writing, though it seems to have existed at the time[1], for the great part of its early existence. The proper inference to be made here seems to be that for Vedic man there existed a significant distinction between the character of spoken and written language, not to mention the distinction between the revealed and mundane spoken word. V. M. Apte feels that this attitude towards vāc was the most important explanation for that: "...the most potent (and in my opinion the chief) reason was the the implicit faith of the ancient Indian in the unlimited--almost divine--power of Vāc or the 'spoken word'."[2]. However, as already made clear, I would go farther than simply saying "almost divine" as Apte does.

Above all, vāc is divine because it is supremely positive, in the sense that, for Ṛgvedic man, it is that by means of which he can take hold of the whole cosmos.

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1 The arguments are presented in V. M. Apte's "The 'Spoken Word' in Sanskrit Literature", BDCRI, Vol. IV, #1, pp. 269-280.

2 Apte, "Spoken Word...", p. 277.

Śaṅkara and Language

The essential questions that will be occupying us in this section are of course no different in form from those which set the tone for the section on Nāgārjuna, namely, "To what is Śaṅkara responding in undertaking his whole philosophical enterprise?", and conjointly, "How may his concern with language be seen to fit into this response?".

In proceeding along these lines we must first of all notice that the task, and in fact the impetus, for 'philosophizing'[1] in India was, almost without exception, a soteriological one, that is to say, one of striving towards[2] a complete release from the bondage of the given or existential situation (māyā, avidyā, saṁsāra, duḥkha, etc.). To actually do philosophy in this sense involves not merely being entertained by abstract intellectual inquiry which seeks to progress towards a confrontation with some ultimate and irreducable state of affairs, and once having found it and deliniated it as best it can, takes it upon itself to call that which is before it the Truth. Instead we find that

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1 By this I mean the thinking that holds together the systematic lattice of metaphysics, epistemology, hermeneutics, etc., in essence partaking in fundamental inquiry and reflection.

2 Of course in the great Absolutist systems such as Advaita and Mādhyamika, the sense of directional progression conveyed by this phrase ultimately collapses.

on the Indian scene inquiry is always overshadowed by implication, one thinks philosophically not simply in order to gain knowledge or understanding in itself, but in order to 'effect'[1] a transformation of one's very being, and thus we may call attention to the fact that a great majority of the words referring to that which is to sought after in the Indian philosophical tradition are words of transformation and becoming such as mukti, kaivalya, nirvāṇa, and mokṣa.

One might say that even in the abstract or evaluative[2] pursuit of Truth there also exists a form of release or transformation, that is, a release from the fetters of ignorance, however, this release in no way implies that the one who gains it actually becomes Truth itself, which is the crowning point of Indian philosophy.[3] Philosophizing in terms of Indian thought does not culminate in a static confrontation with Truth, nor even with the further possibility of appropriating that Truth into one's own exis-

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1 Again we must note the difficulty of employing causal and objective terminology such as this in reference to the two great Monistic schools of Indian Philosophy that concern us in this thesis. Śaṅkara, for example, in his TUB. II. 5. 1, states the following: na hyātmanaivātmana upasaṁkramaṇaṁ saṁbhavati, svātmani bhedābhāvāt, ātmabhūtaṁ ca brahma saṁkramituḥ (The transformation of the ātman by the ātman is not possible on account of the absence of difference within the self (svātman) and Brahman is the true self of the attainer). The inverted commas around the word effect merely urge that it be interpreted heuristically.

2 That is, a purely intellectual pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and which is devoid of existential implication. The trend of post-Enlightenment Natural Science might be the most striking example of this.

3 With the exception, of course, of the Lokāyata which has always seemed to be placed outside the mainstream of Indian Philosophy.

tence, but in the certainty that the inquirer/knower himself becomes the Truth: sa yo ha vai tatparamaṁ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati... (MU. III. 2. 9) —He who verily knows that highest Brahman, he even becomes (or is) Brahman[1].

This unwillingness to disassociate Truth and knowing from the actual becoming of the individual in the Indian tradition is complemented by the corollary dependence of the majority of the Indian systems upon insight rather than axiomatic or a priori concessions[2]. In the āstika schools śabdapramāṇa[3] and an uncontested reverence for śruti form the fundamental focal point for subsequent deliberations, and in fact, this is what most basically defines them, that they cultivate the wisdom of the language of insight (jñāna, anubhava). Similarly, it is well known that in Buddhism, prajñā (P. paññā) is axial as the wisdom of direct insight into nirvāṇa, and that the Buddha classifies himself among those teachers

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1 Compare also the metaphor of the bow and arrow at MU. II. 2. 4: which ends with "...śaravattanmayo bhavet.", that is one should become one with it (viz., the target, Brahman) like an arrow. MU. III. 2. 6 similarly conveys the same message that Vedāntic knowledge (vedāntavijñāna) leads to a unity with Brahman.

2 By "insight" I mean direct experience or immediate apprehension, which in Advaita and Mādhyamika is non-cognitive. In the context of Ṛg Veda, as shown in the section of this thesis on Vāc it is most commonly referred to as dhī- (See Gonda, Vision..., which also has informative sections dealing with vision in the Upaniṣads and in Buddhism). Śaṅkara, in his commentary to MU. III. 2. 11, describes the ṛṣis as those who directly saw (dṛṣṭavantaḥ) and directly experienced (avagatavantaḥ) Brahman. KU. II. 1. encapsulates this process when it states: kaścid dhīraḥ pratyagātmānamaikṣadāvṛttacakṣuramṛtatvamicchan (Every once in a while a wise person, with his eyes turned inward, seeking immortality, has seen the inner ātman.).

3 See D. M. Datta, The Six Ways of Knowing, University of Calcutta, 1972, pp. 247 ff..

who "... have attained here-now to excellence and to going beyond through super-knowledge [abhiññavosānapāramippatta]" (MLS. II p. 400), as opposed to those who do not rely on personal insight but on second-hand report (the anussavika) or on excessive reasoning (the takkīvimaṁsī)[1]. One might even go as far as to say that there are no Truths as such in the Indian tradition but only insights insights into becoming which are eternally present and available, simply awaiting the ripening of the inquirer (brahmajijñāsin or bhikkhu) to the point of receptivity.[2] Truth as evaluation[3] alone, seems to be consistently subservient, in Indian thought, to that reality which is obtained through direct perception or insight.

I call to attention this overriding emphasis on soteriology and insight in Indian philosophy simply to set the general

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1 These latter two, of course, being the Brahmanical followers of the Vedic texts, and the Jainas respectively. For a further exposition of this see K. N. Jayatilleke, "The Buddhist Attitude to Revelation", in The Wheel, Kandy, Ceylon (Buddhist Publication Society #163), Vol. IX, 1971, pp. 33-46.

2 T. R. V. Murti, in his Central Philosophy..., p. 55 seems to be making a similar statement, when he says:

> Systems of philosophy are the elaboration, through concepts and symbols, of certain original intuitions. If all of us had those basic intuitions, systems should be superfluous. Every one is not a Buddha or a Yajñāvalkya. It happens that the great mass of mankind can but be followers and are no leaders in thought. Systems of thought are intended to lead them to the highest experience through symbols and contexts.

Thus the aim of systematic philosophy in the Indian context is to retrieve the original intuitions of certain visionaries.

3 George Bosworth Burch, in his "The Definite and the Indefinite", Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya Memorial Volume, Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, 1958, pp. 25-36, uses this terminology of insight and evaluation in a slightly different manner (see p. 29), that is, to establish a distinction between simple and perrenial philosophy.

tone for the rest of our investigation in this section. Thus we may say that, above all, Śaṅkara's philosophizing is a response to what might be rhetorically termed the 'metaphysical sorrow' or 'malcontent' of given existence (saṁsāra), and it is also a respnse that is founded upon insight into, rather than evaluation of, the sittuation that confronted him. The task and the path ahead of him was, in effect, the conversion of brahmajijñāsā (desire for the knowledge of Brahman) into the fruition of brahmavidyā (Brahman-knowledge)[1].

In the light of this, I propose to discuss Śaṅkara's philosophizing, and what can essentially be looked upon as a co-extensive concern with language, under two main headings, namely, i) Hermeneutics, and ii) Vyavahāra and Paramārtha. In the first we will be concerned with the nature and role of śruti in Śaṅkara Vedānta in the sense that it represents the ultimate language of insight, or in other words, revelation. On the other hand, the second will bring us into the heart of Śaṅkara's systematic metaphysics which seems to revolve around the axial point of the relationship between these two orders of reality (vyavahāra and paramārtha); in terms of language this can perhaps be translated into the problem of the ineffability of Brahman.

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1 From his writings on the prasthānani Śaṅkara was clearly not a devotionalist, in his minor works however, the opposite seems to be coming through. Since it is well known that Śaṅkara was a Śaivite, we cannot say that his philosophical existence was completely free from any form of devotionalism, all we can say is that this does not seem to seep into any of his great Bhāṣyas.

i) Hermeneutics

To begin this segment we might again echo the earlier point of emphasis made by us concerning the relationship between insight (immediate experience) and evaluation in the Indian tradition. Potter concisely points out, to our benefit, the fact that on the whole inference and perception do not enjoy an equal status in Indian thinking, when he states the following[1]:

> The Indians (in contrast with Western rationalism) never even considered the theory that one can *deduce* the nature of reality from *a priori* priciples alone; in this perhaps Indian thought avoided a kind of problem which has cost European philosopheres a great deal of—it would now seem—fruitless energy. All Indian philosophies agree that inference depends upon perception ultimately, and cannot function independently of experience.

This becomes even more pronounced in metaphysical (*parokṣa*) inquiry, and one can, I think, say that in India all systematic metaphysical inquiry begins by taking into account and interpreting the communications or statements of those individuals who have claimed to have directly experienced that which is to be sought after, namely, Ultimate Reality.

Śaṅkara, of course, is no exception to this. For him,

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1 Karl H. Potter, on pp. 161-62 of his "Realitiy and Dependence in the Indian Darshanas", *EIP.*, pp. 155-162. D. M. Datta adds to this on p. 205 of his "Verbal Testimony as a Source of Valid Cognition", appearing in *Recent Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I (Papers selected from the Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress 1925-1934), Edited by K. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 201-211, with the submission that: "...the attempt to reduce testimony to inference is based on a confusion between the source of a knowledge and the source of the knowledge of the validity of that knowledge.". This seems to imply that in terms of knowing facts (as opposed to validity) testimony is not only on par with inference but is in fact the ultimate *pramāṇa*.

the Veda is such a collection of statements, in toto, a revelation (śruti) of Ultimate Reality, though as the name of this school suggests, he interprets the essence of this revelation to lie in its closing aphorisms—the Upaniṣads. Now, since these texts are the principal starting point[1] for his philosophizing it might be best, at this point, to supply some of the basic characteristics that defined them according to Śaṅkara.

First of all, for the Advaitin the origin of the Veda is apauruṣeya (non-human) and yet despite this the Veda is not considered to be eternal[2] since it subsequently dissolves back 'into' Brahman during the course of every pralaya[3]. However, for Śaṅkara śabda (the sacred word) exists prior to cosmogony[4], yet ...

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1 I am using the phrase "starting point" here in a soteriological sense rather than simply in a biographic one, since biographically, given experience is the undisputed beginning for all modes of thinking.

2 The concept of apauruṣeya is taken over by Śaṅkara from the Mīmāṃsā (see Mīmāṃsā Sūtra I. 8. 27), however, the respective submission of the Mīmāṃsā is that the Veda is eternal (autpattika, see Mīmāṃsā Sūtra I. 7. 191), their position is summarized by Śaṅkara at BSB. I. 3. 29.

3 Śaṅkara, for example at BSB. I. 3. 30, takes pains to establish the fact that even though the Veda is destroyed at the onset of pralaya it reappears anew and without alteration at every creation. At one point he states: samānanāmarūpatvāccāvṛttāvapi mahāsargamahāpralayalakṣaṇāyāṃ jagato 'bhyupagamyamānāyāṃ na kaścicchabdaprāmāṇyādivirodhaḥ (There is no contradicition of the validity etc. of śabda, on account of the similarity of name and form in the [cosmic] cycles [even if] it is agreed that the universe is characterised by great creation and dissolution).

4 As at BSB. I. 3. 28: tathā prajāpaterapi sraṣṭuḥ sṛṣṭeḥ pūrvaṃ vaidikāḥ śabdā manasi prādurbabhūvuḥ, paścāttadanugatānarthānsasarjeti gamyate (It is understood that in this way, prior to creation, the Vedic words became audible in the manas of Prajāpati the creator, subsequently, he created those things which corresponded to that [i.e., those words]).

it is not considered to be the material cause (upādānakāraṇa) of the world[1] as seems to be the case with the Śabdādvaitains[2]. Along with this we find that the origin of the Veda is often connected directly with Brahman, as at BU. II. 4. 10 where the four Vedas are metaphorically spoken of as being the breath of the Great Reality (...mahato bhūtasya niḥśvasitam....)[3] or as in Śaṅkara's commentary to the well known third sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa (śāstrayonitvāt).

We can see from this set of characteristics that śruti has the quality of being more temporally proximate to Brahman than any other form of language. (viz. mundane language or laukika vāk). By this I mean to say that as viewed from within the given world (saṁsāra), in the sense that it is subject to time[4], the Veda as revealed language extends itself to the very limits of that time. It is indued with the primordial potency of cosmogony and, out of symmetry, must be one of the final things to be reabsorbed into Brah-

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1 This is made clear at BSB. I. 3. 28: na cedaṁ śabdaprabhavatvaṁ brahmaprabhavatvavadupādānakāraṇābhiprāyenocyate. (The origination from word, is not spoken of with the intention of [conveying the sense of] material cause as is origination from Brahman.). T. N. Dave, in his "Shri Shankaracharya and Sphoṭa" from Sarada Pitha Pradipa, #6, 1966, pp. 19-27, when on p. 27 he states the following: "As the blue-print always precedes the construction-work but is not the material from which the buildings are made, the Śabda with ākṛti always precedes without being the material cause of the Universe.".

2 As at Vākyapadīya I. 1, for example.

3 Śaṅkara, in his commentary to this passage gives paramātman for mahad bhūtam.

4 It is interesting to notice that ākāśa (space), another entity which extends to the limits of given consciousness, in its totality also possesses a proximity to the Absolute and is sometimes called upon as a symbol of that Absolute (see C. U., III. 12. 7-9).

man at pralaya. In terms of limits and origins, the Veda seems to take upon a divine character if only in a cosmological sense.

If we turn now to the accepted Śankarite view of the content of śruti, we again find that in its broadest sense it is a communication of an immediate experience or vision of Reality, and for all that, it is an attempt to render that which is ineffable (anirdeśyam)[1] into an accessible form. It is well known that at the base of the whole complex that might be referred to as the content or meaning of the Veda, according to Śankara, is a non-dual Brahman, and though his thought is more firmly anchored to the Upaniṣads than any other portion of śruti I think that it is safe to assume that Śankara regarded this same essence to be the ultimate content of all of the Veda[2]. On top of this, śruti not only reveals Brahman, but it reveals Brahman in a manner far superior to any form of understanding (pramāṇa)[3] short of direct experience (anubhava) which in any event is above and beyond the pramāṇas altogether. Thus, in terms of its scope and content, śruti takes on a divine quality out of what might be called dogmatic considerations.

However, my use of the term dogma in such a way is not without qualification, in fact, it demands qualification, for if

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1 As at KU. II. 2. 14: tadetaditi manyante 'nirdeśyam paramam sukham ('This is that', in this way they declare the supreme bliss which is ineffable.).

2 This seems to be what Śankara intends when he employs, at BSB. II. 3. 6, the following phrase: ekavākyatvātsarvaśrutīnām (Every śruti is possessed of unanimity [i.e. unity of purport].).

3 Such is stated by Śankara at CUB. VIII. 12. 1: tato gurutarasya pramāṇāntarasyānupapatteh (Another pramāṇa higher than that [i.e. śruti] is not plausible.).

we can understand the way in which Śaṅkara held the Veda to be authoritative, we will be well on our way to understanding how Śaṅkara's philosophy is above all a hermeneutic response. Certainly, Śaṅkara more than simply revered the Veda for those qualities above that I chose to call 'divine', and it is also true that he regarded the projection (utsarga) of the Veda as initiating a lineage of traditional authority (saṁpradāya)[1], yet to call him dogmatic in the callous sense of the word would be a grave error.

The charge of dogmatism in the negative sense is not applied to those thinkers who choose to selectively place one means of authority above all others, but who do so with an irresponsible neglect and bias towards its obvious alternatives. A vindication of Śaṅkara must come in an examination of his attitude towards pramāṇas other than śruti, and his stance on the somewhat overlapping issue of the relationship between reason (tarka, yukti) and śruti[2].

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1 This we learn from Śaṅkara's comments to a smṛti passage which he quotes in BSB. I. 3. 28. Both run as follows:

> 'anādinidhanā nityā vāgutsṛṣṭā svayaṁbhuvā, ādau vedamayī divyā yataḥ sarvāḥ pravṛttayaḥ.' iti. utsargo 'pyayaṁ vācaḥ saṁpradāyapravartanātmako draṣṭavyaḥ; anādinidhanāyā anyādṛśasyotsargasyāsaṁbhavāt. ('Vāc, divine, without beginning or end, eternal, consisting of the Veda, from which come all activities –, was projected by the self-existent one [svayaṁbhū] in the beginning.' Even this projection of vāc is to be viewed as being of the nature of establishing a saṁpradāya, since a projection of another kind is not possible for that which is without beginning or end.).

2 S. K. Das has a well written lecture entitled "From Authority to Freedom: From Śruti to Anubhūti" devoted to this topic in his A Study of the Vedānta, University of Calcutta, 1937, pp. 74-107. One might also consult K. S. Murty's Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta, New York, 1959 and H. Nakamura's "Conflict between Traditionalism and Rationalism: A Problem with Śaṁkara", In PEW., Vol. XII, #2, 1967, pp. 153-162.

First of all, Śaṅkara nowhere really makes an attempt to deal with the pramāṇas as an independent topic but instead treats them throughout his major works as being well known and generally accepted[1]. This may be due, in a sense, to his being lead on in his commentorial exegesis by texts that in themselves do not deal witn the pramāṇas independently; it may also be partially due to his general consensus with the main body of this opponents as to the nature of the pramāṇas; but mainly it seems due to the fact that Śaṅkara was not committed to an exhaustive analysis of what was in any case only a relative reality, for its own sake, but instead with an ultimate and immediately experienced truth that was beyond the pramāṇas. Aside from all of this, however, Śaṅkara in his BSB. essentially seems to hold to three pramāṇas: pratyakṣa (direct perception), anumāna (inference), and śabda (revelation).

Of course in an extreme sense the knowledge provided by the pramāṇas to the knowing subject (pramātṛ) is false and unreal[2] out of the fact that it is only another function of adhyāsa within the māyā complex. However, Śaṅkara grants pramāṇic experience, and I suppose experience in general, a provisional reality and validity up to the point of ātman-realisation (ātmāvagati)[3], this

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1 See N. K. Devaraja's An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge, Delhi, 1962, p. 36.

2 As Śaṅkara states in his Introduction to BSB.: tasmādavidyāvad-viṣayāṇyeva pratyakṣādīni pramāṇāni śāstrāṇi ca (Perceptions, pramāṇas and scriptures have as their objects [those things] imbued with avidyā.).

3 He makes this clear towards the conclusion of BSB. I. 1. 4 where

provisional and wholehearted commitment to assign validity to the given experience can be seen most clearly in his arguments against the Buddhists where he makes such statements as: naca svānubhavāpalāpaḥ prājñamānibhir yuktaḥ kartum (It is not proper [logical] for wise people to deny [the truth of] their own experience. -BSB. II. 2. 29); nakalvabhāvo bāhyārthasyārthasyavasātuṁ śakyate, kasmāt? upalabdheḥ (It is not possible to understand external entities as having non existence. Why? On account of perception. -BSB. II. 2. 28)[1].

Similarly, Śaṅkara appears to approve of reasoning (yukti, tarka) in its application to the mundane sphere and in its capacity for analogical predication of things which are not readily perceivable within the limits of this same sphere. As he states in the

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states: nahyaheyānupādevādvaitātmāvagatau nirvisayānyapramātṛkāni ca pramāṇāni bhavitumarhantīti.... dehātmapratyayo yadvatpramāṇatvena kalpitaḥ, laukikaṁ tadvadevedaṁ pramāṇaṁ tvātmaniścayāt iti (Once within the realization of the unity of the ātman, which is not to be discarded [or avoided] and which is not to be attained, the experiencers [of pramāṇic knowledge] and the pramāṇas [themselves] are to be entitled to no dwelling place.... Just as the body has been felt to be valid [up till then], so also are the pramāṇas valid only up to the certainty of the ātman.).

1 The same point is put in a different way in arguing against the Mīmāṁsā at BSB. I. 1. 2, where the intrinsic reality of external objects is used to illustrate the fact that correct knowledge of Brahman is not a matter of options as it is in the case of dharmajijñāsa, but again it implies that given experience is possessed of a substantial though provisional reality. In fact all the pramāṇas establish the existence of mundane experience (sarvapramāṇaprasiddho lokavyavahāraḥ.... -BSB. II. 2. 31). Śaṅkara's whole argument against the Mīmāṁsā notion of dharmajijñāsa comes to a head at BSB. I. 1. 4 when he concludes that knowledge (jñāna) arises from the right means of knowledge (pramāṇa) which have existing things (bhūtavastus) as their objects, and that knowledge therefore depends upon existing things (vastutantras) and not upon Vedic injunction (codanātantra), nor upon man (puruṣatantra).

commentary to Brahmasūtra II. 1. 4: dṛṣṭasāmyena cādṛṣṭamarthaṁ samarthayantī yuktiranubhavasya saṁnikṛṣyate, viprakṛṣyate tu śrutiraitihyamātreṇa svārthābhidhānāt (Reasoning [yukti], which determines unknown things because of their similarity to known things, is nearer to mundane experience [anubhava], while śruti is more remote since the expression of its meaning is by mere tradition.) Thus the great advantage of reasoning for Śaṅkara seems to be its natural proximity to that which is experienced on the mundane level, however, since Brahman is also said to be accessible through śruti alone[1], Śaṅkara does not accept reasoning in itself as applicable to, or helpful in, understanding Brahman[2]. Yet tarka as ancillary to śruti does appear to be useful in establishing certain facets of the Absolute[3], and this subservience of reasoning to śruti seems

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1 As at BSB. II. 1. 6: rūpādyabhāvāddhi nāyamarthaḥ pratyakṣasya gocaraḥ, liṅgādyabhāvācca nānumānādīnām; āgamamātrasamadhigamya eva tvāyamartho dharmavat (Since it is devoid of any form and without any distinguishing characteristics, this thing [which is Brahman] is not an object of perception nor of inference [anumāna] and the like; however, the sense of this [Brahman] is possessed of the peculiarity of being understood by scripture [āgama] alone.). Cf. KU. I. 2. 9 and the peculiar contradiction at Maitri U. VI. 20: brahma tarkeṇa paśyati.

2 As at BSB. II. 1. 27: ...acintyasvabhāvasya brahmaṇo rūpaṁ vinā śabdena na nirūpyeta.... tasmācchabdamūla evātīndriyārthayāthātmyadhigamaḥ (...one should not expound on the form of Brahman, whose essence [svabhāva] is unthinkable, except with śabda.... Therefore, the apprehension of the real essence [yāthātmya] of that which is supersensuous has its origin in śabda alone.). Similarly, in the opening line of BSB. II. 1. 11 we find: ...nāgamagamye 'rthe kevalena tarkeṇa pratyavasthātavyam (Objection is not to be found, by mere reasoning, in a matter which is accessible through scripture [alone].). Reasoning disassociated from śabda is similarly attacked by Bartṛhari at Vākyapadīya I. 30, 34, 42, and 136.

3 For example Śaṅkara properly credits reason conforming to scripture (āgamānusarītarka) in the closing line of BSB. II. 1. 11, for helping his reaching the conlusion that sentient Brahman is the material and efficient cause of the world.

to be the fundamental attitude in respect to the status of reasoning[1] throughout his Brahmasūtrabhāsya[2].

Still within this brief discussion of Śaṅkara's position regarding what might be called bare empirical modes of thinking, mention may also be made of loka as a non-technical term for experience, which sometimes seems to approach the stature of a pramāṇa in itself. Literally it stands for the world of ordinary experience as a collective whole (e.g., loke 'anubhava - Introduction to BSB., or lokavyavahāra - BSB. II. 2. 31). Appeal seems to be made to loka in the same way one would make a general appeal to common sense, Śaṅkara, however, specifically notes that loka is not considered to be an independent pramāṇa at BSB. I. 3. 32: ...nahi tāvalloko nāma kiṁcitsvatantraṁ pramāṇamasti, pratyakṣādibhya eva hyavicāritaviśeṣebyaḥ pramāṇebhyaḥ prasiddhyannartho lokātprasidhyatītyucyate (there is indeed nothing whatever which is an independent pramāṇa called loka, an object is said to be proven by loka when it is proven by pramāṇas such as pratyakṣa etc., without cosidered deliberation.). Loka is thus a loose and superficial application of the pramāṇas.

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1 N. K. Devarāja in his "Pramāṇas and the Modes of Philosophical Reasoning in Indian Thought", IPA, Vol. IV, 1968, pp. 103-111, though he seems to be unduely critical towards the justification of the pramanas, provides a brief survey of the relationship between tarka and yukti and the pramāṇas in some of the major schools of Indian thought.

2 Setting the stage for the rest of his commentary, Sankara ends BSB. I. 1. 1 with the following statement: tasmādbrahmajijñāsopanyāsamukhena vedāntavākyamīmāṁsā tadavirodhitarkopakaraṇā niḥśreyasaprayojanā prastūyate (Thus is begun, by the entrance into the presentation of brahmajijñāsā, an analysis of Vedāntic statements aided by tarka which is unopposed to them, and which has the highest aim.).

These last few paragraphs serve to establish two points concerning Śaṅkara's stance towards what might be called empirical thinking, that is, thinking independent of or divorced from śabda (the word). The first involves the fact that Śaṅkara's acceptance of adhyāsa or māyā does not automatically vitiate the validity of perceptual reality or the rationalizing (tarka, yukti) that is subsequently founded upon such experience. Thus, though he might in one sense be called an illusionist (māyāvādin), Śaṅkara still held to the principle that the unseen must be determined from the seen (dṛṣṭāccādṛṣṭasiddhiḥ, BSB. II. 2. 12) and this shows that there existed, within his metaphysic, a margin for the valid extension of thinking in itself, and that the conjectures which resulted from such extension were unacceptable if they were opposed to that which was simply seen to be the case—of course what this implies is the central empiricist axiom that facts essentially cannot be irrational. The second evident point in these paragraphs is that for Śaṅkara such thinking on its own is ultimately ineffectual in a soteriological sense, since it cannot tap the visionary force that is capable of altering the being and becoming of the inquirer. What Śaṅkara seems to be saying in this respect is that such thought cannot contribute to a proper understanding (jñāna) of Brahman, and that even within its own realm of logic and abstraction it produces little more than relative conclusions[1].

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1 This latter charge of relativity against the logicians is made, for example at BSB. II. 1. 11: kathamekarūpānavasthitaviṣayaṁ tarkaprabhavaṁ samyag jñānaṁ bhavet? (How may there be correct knowledge arising from tarka, [when] its object is not fixed upon a single form [ekarūpānavasthita]?). Compare also the Preamble to BSB. I. 1. 5; BUB. I. 4. 6; GB. X. 32.

So far, we have seemingly compounded rather than refuted the charge of dogmatism against Śaṅkara, yet what has been established is that empirical experience (pratyakṣa) and reasoning (tarka) lacked the necessary insightful potency to consummate the philosophical enterprise (brahmajijñāsā). Such a potency can arise only from śābda as the communicable essence of the immediate experience (brahmajñāna, anubhava) of what really is; to use Śaṅkara's nomenclature, ātman or Brahman. It is in this sense that śabda is the undisputed beginning of philosphising for Śaṅkara. To come to a final conclusion on the question of dogmatism I think that we must try and see how this beginning from śabda and its recognized potency, effect the further attitude towards, or appropriation of, empirical thinking in the Advaitin's pursuit of Being.

Whenever Śaṅkara makes such statements as: vākyārthavicāraṇādhyavasānanirvṛttā hi brahmāvagatiḥ, nānumānādipramāṇāntaranirvṛttā (The realization of Brahman is accomplished by the firm understanding upon deliberation on the meaning of [Vedic] sentences, not by other pramāṇas such as anumāna etc. - BSB. I. 1. 2) or brahmātmabhāvasya śāstramantareṇānavagamyamānatvāt (...on account of the non-realisability of the state of the unity of Brahman and ātman by means other than śāstra. - BSB. I. 1. 4); I think that he is merely emphasizing the indispensability of śabda as the beginning for philosophical inquiry, which for Śaṅkara is essentially inquiry into the nature of the Absolute. He does not I think intend to say that śruti is a consistently exclusive means of acquiring a proper understanding of Brahman and that the other pramāṇas are totally incapable of making a positive contribution to

this understanding. Rather, the point intended seems to be that this beginning from _śruti_ restructures the empirical _pramāṇas_, such as _pratyakṣa_ and _anumāna_, in the sense that they are instilled with and augmented by the visionary potencey of _śruti_. Thus we encounter at BSB. II. 1. 6 the following: _śrutyanugṛhīta eva hyatra tarko 'nubhavāṅgatvenāśrīyate_ (Only _tarka_ which is blessed [or favoured] by _śruti_ is resorted to as supplementing _anubhava_); this demonstrates, I think, how Śaṅkara does not display an outright contempt for all reasoning, but instead hastens to allow it an integral role within his systematic philosophysing.

It is in this way as well, that the Brahman of Śaṅkara, unlike the _dharma_ of the Mīmāṁsā, is talked of as being indicated by _pramāṇas_ other than _śabda_, as for example at BSB. II. 1. 4: _...pariniṣpannarūpaṁ tu brahmāvagamyate; pariniṣpanne ca vastuni pramāṇāntarāṇāmastyavakāśo yathā pṛthivyādiṣu_ (...Brahman is understood as an having the nature of an existing thing, and in the case of such a really existing thing _e.g._, the earth, there is occasion for other _pramāṇas_.). Here we may also recall the analogy of the perception af a pillar (BSB. I. 1. 2) as an established and existing entity (_vastutantra_), which had the intention of substantiating the knowledge of Brahman as also being the knowledge of an established entity. Finally in this vein we may mention the fact that _ātman_, at BSB. III. 3. 54, is spoken of as having the nature of perception (_upalabdhisvarūpa_) even though it is distinct from the body, and that even in _śruti_ Yājñavalkya is asked to explain that Brahman which is _sākṣādaparokṣādbrahma_ (BU. III. 4. 1), that is, directly and manifestly perceivable (_cf._, BSB. III. 3. 32).

With *śābda* as the spring of potency, the restructured and revitalized *pramāṇas* all confirm and work towards the apprehension of a non-dual Absolute. For this central reason, namely that in Śaṅkara Advaita there eventually exists a mutual enhancement between *śabda* and the more empirical *pramāṇas*, I feel that Śaṅkara is never capable of being subject to the vulgar charge of dogmatism. The ultimate consistency of this non-duality, extending from the apparent remoteness of transcendental ideals to the concrete actuality of mundane experience, is the crowning point of Śaṅkara's system and is encapsulated in the renowned *mahavākya*: *tattvamasi*[1].

Thus we have the chief aspect of Śaṅkara's system of philosophizing, which I see to be composed of the compelling interaction of the empirical *pramāṇas*, or in other words thought, with *śabda* or the communicable essence of visionary insight into Absolute Reality. The nature of this interaction is probably best described as a dialectical one, both in the more general sense of an activity which reaches its culmination by moving between question and response[2], and in the technical Hegelian sense as a synthesizing movement between the contradictory points of a fundamental opposition, which eventually overcomes its original static antagonism. Therefore when thought questions the word (*śabda*), res-

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1 *CU*. VI. 8. 7. The most exhaustive analysis of this *mahavākya* in the Śaṅkarite tradition of Advaita seems to come from his direct pupil Sureśvara, and occurs in the third chapter of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*.

2 It is probably debatable whether a dialogue in the true sense of the word dialectic occurs here, since on the surface, textual exegesis seems to be a one-way proposition, but anybody who has chosen to read the Upaniṣads with a philosphical spirit will readily find that they quickly raise far more questions than are immediately answerable and thus propel the inquiring mind ahead.

pondingly the word challenges thought, and presses it to its limits[1]. Similarly, *śabda* and thought, as they are given, are essentially in opposition, since the fundamental realm of the former is transcendental and of the latter empirical; the one negatively complementing the other. Yet *śabda*, as shown above, is able to restructure thought towards its synthetic compatability with the word, producing a systematic consistency in Śaṅkara that avoids the liability of dogmatism.

This dialectical interaction between thought and *śabda* is what I choose to call Śaṅkara's hermeneutic, and it is an exegesis of scriptural word that involves becoming—a very upbuilding of the being of the inquirer. What is hermeneutic if it is not the interaction of thought and scriptural word? Thus Śaṅkara's philosophizing must, in the first place, be seen as a hermeneutical response, for his systematic philosophy begins with *śabda*. The actual role of language within this hermeneutical response is essentially a catalytic one, that is to say, it initiates the reaction and gives power to it yet, it does not remain as a residue after the proper culmination of it, for it consumes itself within the reaction so that in *anubhava* one leaves behind both Veda and the *pramāṇas*[2].

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1 The chief characteristic of the authority of scripture is its ability to generate understanding (*vijñānopādakatva*) and this is stated in BUB. I. 4. 7: *na vākyasya vastvanvākhyānaṃ kriyānvākhyānaṃ vā prāmāṇyāprāmāṇyakāraṇaṃ, kiṃ tarhi niścitaphalavadvijñānotpādakatvam* (The the reason for the authority or unauthority of a Vedantic passage is not its explanation of fact or action, but its ability to generate precise and fruitful understanding.).

2 See BU. IV. 3. 22, Śaṅkara comments on the phrase *vedā avedāḥ* in BSB. IV. 1. 3 as follows: *'iṣyata evāsmābhiḥ śruterapyabhāvaḥ prabodhe* (In the state of enlightenment we admit the

We must realize therefore, that this hermeneutical response serves as the fundamental base for the subsequent ontological dimension of Śaṅkara's philosophizing, and that the distinguishing mark of language (*śabda*) at this most fundamental level is its twofold capacity to generate knowledge and simultaneously restructure empirical thinking[1].

ii) *Vyavahāra* and *Paramārtha*

Such as he is, man *qua* philosopher is never content to merely accept the given, instead he *must* understand it, and if that understanding, in turn, points beyond itself, he is again compelled to meet its challenge until some final resolution is attained[2]. Even the devastating discovery that there is no Ultimate Truth or Reality[3] would not undermine this philosophical enterprise, for in that case as well, man will have come to terms with his passion for inquiry—an understanding (*prajñā*) will have been reached.

Having shown what in essence is the mode of Śaṅkara's philosophizing, namely the hermeneutical response, and where it be-

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absence of even *śruti*.). Also in the last phrase of *BSB*. I. 1. 4, we encounter a similar remark pertaining to the *pramāṇas*, namely that they are valid only up to the certainty of the *ātman*.

1 This restructured thinking participates again in the hermeneutic response after two integral fashions, *manana* (reflection) and *nididhyāsana* (repeated meditation). As at *BSB*. I. 1. 4: *avagatyarthatvānmanananididhyāsanayoḥ* (On account of the fact that both *manana* and *nididhyāsana* exist for the sake of realization.).

2 At which point, if you pardon the thetoric, either the philosopher conquers, or is devoured by his inquiry.

3 As is the case with the Mādhyamika.

gan, that is, with *śabda*, we must now turn to the intellectual fruit that is borne co-extensively with the hermeneutical response. I say co-extensively, since to separate the intellectual product and activity in Śaṅkara from his strictly hermeneutical endeavours would be doing him the greatest disservice. Certainly in moving away from hermeneutics towards polemics, as the schema of this section is doing, the movement appears to be a movement away from becoming and into the domain of pure intellectualization, but I don't think Śaṅ- ever truly saw it as such. Why should Śaṅkara occupy himself with drawn out theoretical abstractions concerning Brahman or intense debates with other schools if the world and philosophizing itself is only an illusion? How can a systematic Advaita exist and still remain sincere to its own spirit? The answer seems to lie in the power of *śabda* to restructure and revitalize even the cosmic vanity of man's compulsion to make everything that confronts him subject to the limits of his rational comprehension, so that the importance and integral nature of thought and its products, even in what appears to be an illusionistic and ultimately mystical philosophy, is nowhere given up in the sense that we would expect. I choose to isolate these strata in Śaṅkara's thought only to serve a heuristic purpose, and not in an effort to stray from the organic nature of Śaṅkara's philosophizing.

In any event, we move on from a hermeneutic which interprets existence to a systematic ontology, abstracted from and through the hermeneutic, which seeks to define that Absolute Reality presented in the hermeneutic. It is from the compulsion to define Brahman that Śaṅkara's ontology takes shape, and thus in its abstraction

it may appear one step removed from the immediacy of the hermeneutic, yet this is not so, for even the task of defining Brahman is not divorced from, but contributes to, the becoming of the inquirer (MU. III. 2. 9), albeit if done correctly. Śaṅkara's task is in no sense diminished or altered here, since he is still involved with the introspective cultivation (brahmajijñāsā) of the implosion of the false distance (avidyā, māyā) between the ground (adhiṣṭhāna) and the goal (jñeya) of existence (ground and goal both, being Brahman/ātman)—this is constant throughout Śaṅkara[1].

The medium of philosophizing in this case is conceptualization, and a conceptualization which tirelessly persists after being (sat).[2] The concern with language here is easily determinable, for while in our discussion of hermeneutics in Śaṅkara we found that the chief mark of language was its revelatory potency, that is, its potency to interpret and reconstruct existence, in the ontological dimension of Śaṅkara Advaita the preoccupation with language involves its relative capacity, or dialectically its relative incapacity, to delimit Brahman[3]. One can see that the shift here is a subtle

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1 Śaṅkara states at the close of his 'Introduction' to BSB., that all the Vedāntas (texts, as well as the philosophy as a whole) are taken up for the destruction of evil and the acquiring of the knowledge of the oneness of ātman (asyānarthahetoḥ, ātmaikatvavidyāpratipattaye sarve vedāntā ārabhyante.). In other words, the self as knowing agent (pramātr) which is grounded in ātman becomes that self which is to be sought after (anveṣṭavyātma) or Brahman (see the close of BSB. I. 1. 4)—this is the scope and culmination of Śaṅkara Vedānta.

2 For the importance of this concept in Śaṅkara and its identification with Brahman, see P. T. Raju's "The Conception of Sat (Existence) in Śaṅkara's Advaita", ABORI, XXXVI, 1955, pp. 33-45, and especially Richard Brooks, "The meaning of 'real' in Advaita Vedānta", PEW. XIX, 1969, pp. 386-398.

3 The ontological status of language itself is naturally included here. as a problem.

one, involving a movement from an emphasis on the primordial potency of language to a more formal concern with its capacity to signify the object of its content[1].

In order to enter directly into the discussion, we can first of all establish the general relation between Brahman and language in Śaṅkara Vedānta. Language here is used in the broadest possible sense, so that ontologically it stands for the form and content of everything 'this side of Brahman'[2]; the Sanskrit equivalent for this would perhaps be the concept of nāmarūpa (name and form)[3]. It is well known that in Advaita everything other

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1 The distinction of śābda, as word-form in general, from dhvani the actual sound itself, seems to have first been put forward by the early Grammmarians (for esample see S. D. Joshi, "Patañjali's Definition of a Word: An Interpretation", PTSICO, Vol. III, Pt. 1, pp. 94-5). It appears to be a central base for the development of systematic philosophical reflection, and especially of systematic ontology. This, I feel, is the great difference in attitude towards language between Śaṅkara, who presupposes such a distinction throughout his work (surfacing specifically at BSB. I. 3. 28: tannibandhanāścodāttādayo viśeṣā na varṇasvarūpanibandhanāḥ - The difference in loudness etc., has its origin in that [dhvani] and not in the nature of the letters.), and Ṛg Veda where such a distinction is apparently absent.

2 By this I mean māyā or vyavahāra, that is, the totality of the ultimately unreal given existence.

3 The secondary work on this concept is indeed sparse. Marlya Falk in the first 55 pages of her Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa, University of Calcutta, 1943 presents a speculative survey of the term burdened by its obvious yogic and psychological emphasis. Strictly in terms of Śaṅkara Advaita, which definitely makes use of the concept, the dozen or so pages that Paul Hacker devotes to nāmarūpa in his "Eigentümlichkeiten der Lehre und Terminologie Śaṅkaras", ZDMG, 100, 1951, pp. 246-286, are the most comprehensive. In the broadest sense nāmarūpa seems to be a metaphysical principal rather than an epistemological or psychological one even though it is quite often spoken of as arising from avidyā (BSB. I. 4. 22; II. 1. 14; 22; 3. 46; III. 2. 6), that is, if one may talk of metaphysical principles other than Brahman within the ontology of Śaṅkara.

than Brahman is ultimately unreal and belongs to the category of illusion (māyā), nāmarūpa is no exception to this, as stated at BSB. I. 3. 41: nāmarūpābhyāmarthāntarabhūtamākāśaṁ vyapadiśiti; na ca brahmaṇo 'nyannāmarūpābhyāmarthāntaram (It is mentioned that ākāśa is different in nature from nāmarūpa; nothing other than Brahman is different from nāmarūpa.)[1].

However, this relegation downwards on the ontological ladder, as we should well expect by now, does not escape the delicate ontological finesse that is so characteristic of Advaita. Nāmarūpa is not asat (completely non-existent), for as Śaṅkara points out at CUB. III. 19. 1, we often come across the employment of the word sat in the sense of differentiated nāmarūpa[2]. This of course, needs some amount of amplification, for how can we consider anything other than Brahman to be sat (existent, real)? Such an explanation comes, I think, in at least two significant places, namely, CUB. VI. 2. 3. and CUB. VI. 3. 2. In the former, Śaṅkara encapsulates the Advaitin's philosophical position: na tathāsmābhiḥ kadācitkvacidapi sato 'nyadabhidhānamabhidheyaṁ vā vastu parikalpyate. sadeva tu sarvamabhidhānamabhidhīyate ca yadanyabuddhyā (We do not presuppose any designation or object of designation whatsoever, other than sat [the existent]. But sat is only every designation and everthing that is designated being [wrongly] conceived as something else.). In the latter we en-

1 Cf., nāmarūpamāyā at BSB. II. 2. 2.

2 nāmarūpavyākṛtaviṣaye sacchabdaprayogo dṛṣṭaḥ. We find such an occurence in Śrutī, for example at BU. I. 6. 3: nāmarūpe sattyam (Name and form are truth.).

counter something even more relevant: sarvaṁ ca nāmarūpādi sad-ātmaneva satyaṁ vikārajātaṁ, svatastvanṛtameva. 'vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ' (All that is born from modification, viz., nāmarūpa etc., is real [satyam] only in so far as it partakes of the nature of Being [sadātman], but in itself it is just false. 'Modification is founded upon vāc, it is [only] name.')[1]. Thus, just as with the pramāṇas and the whole of manifest existence in general, language possesses only a partial ontological status, that is to say, it is not ultimately real in the same sense that Brahman is, yet its apprehension cannot be pragmatically denied, in the same manner that one cannot completely deny the experience of given existence[2]. Sat, for Śaṅkara, is the very axis of existence, and as such an analogous residue of Brahman in the world, it may be seen to figuratively partake of that supreme sat which is the self-sustaining substratum of, and yet beyond, all given existence—Brahman.

Though nāmarūpa is meant to account for, or include, all manifest existence, this is not the only way in which it is used by Śaṅkara, for at BSB. II. 1. 17 a rather clear distinction is

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1 The well known śruti quoted here by Śaṅkara is from CU. VI. 1. 4. A somewhat inconclusive philological study of the phrase, and especially the peculiar initial compound, occurs in three sequential papers: F. B. J. Kuiper, "Vācārambhaṇam", IIJ., Vol. I., 1957, pp. 155-159; J. A. B. van Buitenen, "Vācārambhaṇam Reconsidered", IIJ., Vol. II., 1958, pp. 195-305; F. B. J. Kuiper, "Vācārambhaṇam (II)", IIJ., Vol. II, 1958, pp. 306-310. Śaṅkara, through his commentary to the passage makes it quite clear as to how the passage should be taken when he says nāmaiva kevalam (it exists in name alone). Cf., CUB. VII. 1. 3: jñātavānasītyetat, nāmaivaitat (That which you have known is only nāman.), and BUB. II. 5. 1.

2 As opposed to the complete non-existence tuccha or logical impossibility such as a square circle, etc..

made pertaining to the concept. It runs as follows: vyākrta-nāmarūpatvāddharmādavyākrtanāmarūpatvam dharmāntaram (The undifferentiated nāmarūpa is other in character from the differentiated nāmarūpa.). The psychological, epistemologocal, and cosmological implications of this are easily recognisable by analogy, that is, the differentiation of the jīva, the dawning of pramānic understanding, and the unfolding of the universe (jagat), all involve a kind of satkāryavāda (the evolution of effect already contained in the cause)[1] heuristically resorted to by Śaṅkara[2].

After this fashion the unmanifested name and form (avyākrtanāmarūpa) is identified with the highest reality: ātmabhūte nāmarūpe avyākrte ātmaikaśabdavācye (Unmanifested name and form consisting of the ātman is to be communicated by the one word ātman. -- AiUB. I, 2). Paul Hacker summarizes the seminal potentiality that might be associated with Brahman as the material sātkaryavādic cause of the universe, but instead is predicated of avyākrtanāmarūpa, in the following words (his citations are from BSB.)[3]:

> ...I, 1, 5... sind die unentfalteten Nāmarūpe das Objekt, das dem Erkennen des Īśvara vor Beginn der Schöpfung gegenübersteht; I, 2, 22... werden sie mit dem "Unvergänglichen" (aksara) und dem "Unentfalteten" (avyākrta) identifiziert und als eine Samenkraft (bījaśakti), deren Träger (āśraya) Gott der Herr (Īśvara) ist, bezeichnet; "Same" (bīja),

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1 For a discussion of satkāryavāda consult pp. 36-54 of M. C. Bhartiya's Causation in Indian Philosophy, Vimal Prakashan, Ghaziabad, 1973.

2 As, for example, at BSB. II. 1. 18 where Śaṅkara defends this explanation of causation.

3 P. Hacker, "Eigentumlichkeiten....", p. 258.

> "Same des Weltlaufs und der Weltausbreitung" (samsāra-prapañca-bīja) werden die Nāmarūpe auch II. 1. 14...genannt; I. 4. 2...und ähnlich I. 4. 3...wird vom Urzustande (prāg-avasthā) der Welt gesprochen, in welcher Name und Gestalt noch nicht entfaltet(vyākrta) oder manifestiert (abhivyakta) waren....

However I think it is important to recognise that this avyākrta-nāmarūpa is more than merely an insentient, primordial lump of matter in the manner of the Sāṅkhya pradhāna[1], for it contains within itself the very form and logic of that which is manifested as the cosmos, and this logic which conceptually structures existence (CUB. III.12.1) is essentially language.[2] This may perhaps account for the prominent place of language in the cosmogonic scheme of Advaita, as in the case of the vyāhrtis for example[3].

At this point, having given a outline of the two aspects of nāmarūpa in Śaṅkara Advaita, we might briefly and speculatively (since Śaṅkara never seems to attempt to do this) inquire into its precise connection with language, that is, how is it a 'thing to do with language' and why use such a term to describe the totality of manifest existence? It is easy to see that nāman (name), the

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1 Though nāmarūpa is often talked about by Śaṅkara as being brought into existence by an agent (Īśvara; see Hacker, "Eigentumlichkeiten....", p. 267 f.), I feel that he only impels the manifestation and has nothing really to do with the latent structuring already contained in the unmanifest nāmarūpa.

2 Conceptual appropriation of reality, seems in fact to be the result of being able to name that reality and thereby fit it with a logical form that renders it meaningful and communicable to the appropriator. This view of Śaṅkara's would contrast with Wittgenstein's Tractarian viewpoint that language merely pictures a logic already existing in reality: "Der Satz z e i g t die logische Form der Wirklichkeit." (Tractatus 4.121d).

3 See BU. I. 2. 4, and BSB. I. 3. 28: ata eva hi vaidikācchabdād-devādikaṁ jagatprabhavati; also ibid.: tathā prajāpaterapi srastuh srsteh pūrvaṁ vaidikāḥ śabdā manasi prādurbabhūvuh.

initial part of the compound, stands for something essential to language, that is, that element which has the capacity to copy or correspond to something reciprocal in existence. In combination these elements would compose the representational fabric of existence. Rūpa, on the other hand, does not as readily belong to language as does nāma. Literally rūpa means shape or form, in the same sense that a god, such as Agni for example, may be said to possess many forms (rūpas), and by the analogy that each of these shapes has its proper nāman (e.g., Jātavedas, Vaiśvānara, Apām Napāt, etc.) we might say that rūpa is the specific content or meaning of nāman in existence[1].

It must be rembered that the concept of nāmarūpa is employed by Śaṅkara in order to explain the radical multiplicity and differentiation of manifest existence and its relationship to that primordial essence from which it evolved. For Śaṅkara it seems that nāman and rūpa, when they are manifested, are manifested simultaneously, one cannot have name without content. Language is not evolved to correspond with some already present objectifiable existence, nor is existence conjured up to correspond to some primordial name. Bhūḥ, etc., was uttered and at that instant the

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1 In essence, there does not appear to be any reason why we cannot take this as comperable to the relation between śabda (word) and artha (meaning). Mention must also be made of another compound which seems to be used by Śaṅkara in a manner similar to that of nāmarūpa, though there appears to be only two occurrences of it, both in CUB.. The compound is buddhiśabda (notion or idea, and word), happening at CUB. VI. 2. 3 as śabdabuddhi, in the sense that for the knowers of the true character of clay, the śabdabuddhi of jar etc., cease (in the same sentence abhidhānabuddhi, or name and idea, parallels śabdabuddhi for the instance of the rope-snake), and at CUB. VI. 4. 1 as buddhiśabda in the sense that this is what persits, in an illusory way, comprising existence. These occurrences would seem to indicate that the proper way to take nāmarūpa is in this sense of word and its conceptual content.

worlds etc., appeared, one did not follow after the other.

Thus nāmarūpa is a descriptive two-element formula that reduces given existence down to its basic conceptual components: name and the objectifiable content of name (one essentially inseperable from the other). Its double nature (manifest and unmanifest) is used by Śaṅkara to causally account for the multiplicity of given existence and its inherent structuring.

The most important point to be grasped throughout the whole of the preceding exposition of Śaṅkara's concern with nāmarūpa, is that Śaṅkara uses it only as a heuristic device and nothing more. For Śaṅkara, Brahman can never, in a truly honest sense, be anything other than what it is, namely, Supreme Reality. In this way Brahman cannot be identified with even avyākṛtanāmarūpa, for that would make Brahman something other than what it is, or in other words, the material cause of given existence. Śaṅkara explains this emphatically at TUB. II. 6:

> Thus, it is because of Brahman that nāmarūpa is possessed of essence in all occurrences. [Yet], Brahman does not consist of it. It [nāmarūpa] is said to belong to that [Brahman] just in the sense that it [nāmarūpa] is not, when that [Brahman] is taken away. And on account of these two upādhis Brahman as a factor becomes conceptual exchange made up of such words and meanings etc., as "knower", "that which is to be known", and "knowledge".[1]

In this way Śaṅkara begins to make the most significant 'distinction'[2] in Advaita Vedānta and one that is essential to the syste-

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1 ato nāmarūpe sarvāvasthe brahmaṇaivātmavatī. na brahma tadātmakam. te tatpratyākhyāne na sta eveti tadātmake ucyete. tābhyām copādhibhyām jñātṛjñeyajñānaśabdārthādisarvasaṁvyavahārabhāgbrahma.

2 Again we must simply note that all distinctions in Śaṅkara Advaita are ultimately pseudo distinctions that dissolve themselves in a heuristic upbuilding of knowledge concomittant with being.

matic development of any true Absolutism, namely, that between paramārtha (highest or final truth) and vyavahāra (mundane or relative truth)[1].

In the paramārtha sense Brahman is completely without predication (nirguṇa)[2]; it is the primary essence and thus from this highest standpoint given existence must be accounted for and described by second order concepts such as māyā, adhyāsa, upādhi, avidyā, etc.. Nāmarūpa, in its most proper sense, must also be taken as one of these ontologically oblique concepts, and in fact nāmarūpa appears to be the commonest upādhi (limiting adjunct)[3] of the highest Brahman referred to by Śaṅkara, as for example in the following statement from BUB. II. 1. 20: ...nāmarūpopādhinimittā eva ātmanyasaṃsāradharmiṇi sarve vyavahārāḥ (All mundane relativities, in respect to the ātman that has the quality of being asaṃsāra, are occasioned by the upādhis of nāmarūpa). Similarly, Brahman is

1 This is of course, the common matrix for both Advaita Vedānta and Mādhyamika as Absolutisms. A collection of well written papers on this subject edited by Mervyn Sprung comprise a volume entitled The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta, D. Reidel Pub. Co., Dordecht, 1973.

2 Nirguṇa Brahman is that Brahman which is sarvaviśesarahita (free from all qualification - Preamble to CUB. III. 12. 1); it is denied the character of an object that is approachable (prāptiviṣayatvaṃ pratiṣidhyate - CUB. VIII. 4. 1) and nirākṛtasarvanāmarūpakarmapāramārthātmavastu (That reality which is the true atman having destroyed all name and form and action. - AiUB. Intro). See also, MUB. I. 1. 6; KeUB. I. 3. 15; BUB. III. 5. 1; IV. 3. 30; etc.. Its counterpart is Saguna Brahman or Nirguna Brahman as limited by various upādhis, that is, by attribution of qualities; see KeUB. II. 1; MUB. II. 1. 2; CUB. III. 14. 4; VIII. 1. 1.(Intro.); etc..

3 The stock analogy is give at BUB. II. 1. 20: tāni nāmarūpagatāni upādhaya eva ātmano ghatakarakāpavarakabhūchidrāṇīva ākāśasya (Those things which are situated in nāmarūpa are only upādhis of ātman, just like a jar, a bowl, an inner room, and a crater are so of the ether [ākāśa].).

spoken of as having nāmarūpa imagined as existing within it just as day and night seem to be in the sun but in a paramārtha sense they are not there at all[1]. The whole situation is nicely summed up by Śaṅkara at KeUB. II. 1:

> Many, indeed, are the forms of Brahman made by the upādhi of nāmarūpa, but not from its own standpoint. From its Brahman's own standpoint, words etc. as well as forms are disallowed: 'That which is in this way soundless, without touch, formless, undecaying, tasteless, eternal, and odourless.'.[2]

Therefore in respect to the ontological status of language as it fits under this designation of nāmarūpa, one must conclude that Brahman is ontologically a limit to it, that is to say that nāmarūpa is functionally[3] real on its own ground (vyavahāra), but ultimately (paramārthe), nāmarūpa does not even merit the ontological concession that would allow a standing comparison between it and Brahman[4].

However, and more importantly, this final assessment of

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1 TUB. II. 8. 5: te ca punarnāmarūpe savitaryahorātre iva kalpite na paramārthato vidyamane. See also MUB. II. 1. 2 where two different aksaras are discussed, one being an upādhi of Brahman and the other being the [avyākṛta].

2 anekāni hi nāmarūpopādhikṛtāni brahmano rupāni na svatah. svatastu "aśabdamasparśamarūpamavyayaṁ tathā 'rasaṁ nitya śagandhavacca yat." iti śabdadibhih saha rūpāni pratisidhyante.

3 In the sense that nāmarūpa is potentially reducible to Brahman and must somehow partake of its being (sat), not to leave out the fact of its pragmatic givenness.

4 For if this were not the case we would have an ursurping dualism creeping into Advaita, and this is what seems to be implied at BUB III. 5. 1, for example: yadā tu paramārthadṛstyā paramātmatattvāt śrutyanusāribhih [sic] anyatvena nirupyamāne nāmarūpe mṛdādivikāravat vastvantare tattvato na stah, salilaphenaghatādivikāravadeva, tadā tadapeksya 'ekamevādvitīyam' 'neha nānāsti kiñcana' ityādi paramārthadarśanagocaratvaṁ pratipadyate.

the ontological validity of _nāmarūpa_ in juxtaposition to the absolute reality of Brahman, is summed up by Śaṅkara in an expression that is peculiarly invested with linguistic implications, namely, _anirvacanīya_ (indefinable). The term _anirvacanīya_ occurs three times explicitly in _BSB._ and once implicitly[1]. Of the explicit occurrences, _BSB._ I. 1. 5 (_tattvānanyatvābhyāmanirvacanīye nāmarūpe avyākṛte vyācikīrṣite iti_ - The unmanifest _nāmarūpa_ which is about to be manifested, is indefinable as that [Brahman] or different [from that].) and _BSB._ II. 1. 14 (_...avidyākalpite nāmarūpe tattvānyatvābhyāmanirvacanīye saṁsāraprapañcabījabhūte..._ - That _nāmarūpa_ which is imagined by _avidyā_ and which is of the seeds of the _saṁsāra_ (cosmos) is indefinable as that [Brahman] or different [from that].) are both concerned with the relationship between Brahman and unmanifested _nāmarūpa_, while _BSB._ II. 1. 27 (_avidyākalpitena ca nāmarūpalakṣaṇena rūpabhedena vyākṛtāvyākṛtātmakena tattvānyatvābhyāmanirvacanīyena brahma pariṇāmādisarvavyavahārāspadatvaṁ pratipadyate_ - Brahman [seemingly] occurs in the state which is the abode of all given existence by way of transformation _etc._, through difference in forms which is characterized by _nāmarūpa_ both manifest and unmanifest and imagined by _avidyā_ and which is indefinable as that [Brahman] or different [from that].) amplifies the previous accounts to include manifest _nāmarūpa_ within this indefinable relation to Brahman. The implicit case, _BSB._ I. 4. 3 (_avyaktā hi sā māyā; tattvānyatvanirūpaṇasyāśakyatvāt_ - This _māyā_ is indeed the unmanifest, on account of the impossibility of defining it as that

1 As pointed out by Paul Hacker in his "Eigentumlichkeiten...", pp. 261-264.

Brahman or as different from that .), seems to align itself with the first two instances, that is, those dealing with unmanifested nāma-rūpa in relation to Brahman, yet, on top of this there appears to be an instance at BUB II. 4. 10 (nāmarūpayoḥ [sic.] eva hi paramātmopādhi-bhūtayorvyākriyamāṇayoḥ salilaphenavattatvānyatvenānirvaktavyayoḥ sarvā-vasthayoḥ saṁsāratvam... (Nāmarūpa alone, which is [in itself] the upādhis of the paramātman, which is manifested, and which like foam and water, cannot be described as that [paramātman] or different [from that], in all its stages constitutes saṁsāra...), which predicates this characteristic indescribability of manifested nāmarūpa alone and in this respect is different from all of the four other occurrences.

In undertaking a brief form-structural analysis of these five statements, we can isolate three parallel components which bear upon our concern with anirvacanīya as the concept which best accounts for the relationship between Brahman and nāmarūpa. The first and most problematic is the nāmarūpa component, since its content varies from its unmanifested to manifested aspect to both simulataneously. However if we take into consideration the fact that with the help of satkāryavāda we do not have to accept an essential distinction between the unmanifested nāmarūpa and its effect, so that in each instance both aspects are conveyed. The second component is, of course, the pivotal one in the statement since it is the verbal form upon which the relation stands, namely, anirvacanīya (lit., is not to be spoken of) and its intention is further clarified by its counterparts in the last two sentences (nirūpaṇasyāśakyatva and anirvaktavya). Still, the component that completes the relation and further defines the sense in which anirvacanīya is to be taken, is tattvānyatva ... (lit., thatness or otherness) which in the context carries the sense

of 'the same as Brahman or different from Brahman'[1]—the importance of this component is further brought out by the fact that it is the only component that is completely consistent throughout all of the statements.

In this way we are left with the most basic statement: '<u>Nāmarūpa</u>, in all its aspects, is indefinable in terms of being the same as Brahman or different from Brahman.'. One can quickly recognize that this is not a statement about Brahman, but about <u>nāmarūpa</u>, that is, it does not attempt to say anything about Brahman in terms of <u>nāmarūpa</u>, as for example, that Brahman is indefinable in terms of <u>nāmarūpa</u>, or in other words, unspeakable, but quite the opposite, that <u>nāmarūpa</u> is indefinable in terms of Brahman, or in other words, that one cannot establish a positive or negative relation[2] between <u>nāmarūpa</u> and Brahman in terms of Brahman. If we wish we can dialectically make an aditional abstraction and state as N. K. Devaraja does (in his own italics) that: "<u>The description [anirvacanīya] ... is meant to characterize the world rather than to declare it to be characterless.</u>"[3]. In addition to this one will also recognize that <u>anirvacanīya</u> is not employed here by Śaṅkara with the same implica-

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1 It seems that <u>tattva</u> in <u>tattvānyatva</u> is more properly taken as an abstract of <u>tat</u> + <u>tat-tva</u> (thatness) rather than the substantive <u>tattva</u> (reality) which would render <u>tattvānyatva</u> as reality and otherness (unreality?) making it perhaps too analogous to the <u>sadasat</u> explanation of <u>anirvacanīya</u> in later Advaita. For the difference in renditions between use of the abstraction and the substantive see Paul Hacker "Eigentumlichkeiten...", pp. 202-203.

2 It is interesting to note that the possibility for equivocation is left open and seems to occur, for example, at <u>BGB</u>. IV. 25.

3 N. K. Devaraja, <u>An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge</u>, Delhi, 1962, p. 162.

tions that were bestowed upon it by the later Advaitins, who transformed it into the technical anirvacanīyakhyāti theory of error[1].

What must be concluded from this statement, that stands tangentially to the ontological status of both nāmarūpa and Brahman, is that the speakability of Brahman in terms of nāmarūpa is in no way here precluded, and in fact, those instances in which Brahman is sometimes referred to as being beyond speech[2] and in essence unspeakable are in themselves a function of nāmarūpa and hence a speakability in terms of nāmarūpa. J. G. Arapura makes a definitive statement concerning this when he states the following[3]:

> Brahman talk also turns out to be māyā talk. Clearly the subject of discourse, that is māyā, is not itself but Brahman, and as such the paradox of self-invalidation implied in the statement 'the world is il-

1 This theory was employed by the later Advaitins to explain the ontological status of erroneous or illusory perceptions. Basically it states that the illusory perception of a rope-snake, for example, is on the one hand unreal (asat) because it is sublated by a true perception of the rope, and on the other hand real (sat) because it, as opposed to something that is completely unreal (tūcchika, e.g., a square circle), it is perceivable, and therefore as a result of this dialectical tension must be classified as anirvacanīya (indefinable). D. C. Bhattacharya, on p. 259 of his "Post-Śaṅkara Advaita" in The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. III, H. Bhattacharyya ed., Calcutta, 1969, pp. 255-280, attributes the establishing of this theory to Sureśvara. See also, J. Sinha, Problems of Post-Śaṁkara Advaita Vedanta, Sinha Pub. House, Calcutta, 1971, pp. 80-87. For a concise survey of the various khyātis consult J. Sinha, Indian Epistemology of Perception, Sinha Pub. House, Calcutta, 1969, pp. 74-120. This transformation of anirvacanīya to anirvacanīyakhyāti is archtypical or the transition from a foundational kind of Brahman oriented thinking in Śaṅkara, to a type of thinking which emphasizes technical abstraction (in the form of critical epistemology and dialectic) and is moreso oriented in the givenness of existence, exemplified in later Advaita.

2 Such as at TU. II. 4: yato vāco nivartante; BGB. XIII. 12: vācah [sic] agocaratvāt; etc..

3 From p. 117 of J. G. Arapura's, "Māyā and the Discourse About Brahman", in The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta, M. Sprung ed., Dordecht Holland, pp. 109-121.

> lusory', it being part of that illusory world, resolves itself. If māyā is the logical structure of the discourse about Brahman then discourse about māyā is simply its obverse side, existing only tenuously [as anirvacanīya].

Therefore, the possibility of making assertions about Brahman is never truly given up by Śaṅkara and, strictly speaking, is necessary in order to make Brahman accessible[1].

Having come thus far, the problem now remaining in this segment is: 'How does Śaṅkara exemplify Brahman as speakable in terms of nāmarūpa?'. In other words, what does it mean to say that Brahman is speakable in terms of nāmarūpa, according to Śaṅkara?

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1 This is what Śaṅkara seems to be saying in explaining the phrase tadasya rūpaṁ praticakṣaṇāya (That form of this [Brahman] is for the sake of displaying [itself].) from BU. II. 5. 19 by stating in the commentary to it: ...pratikhyāpanāya; yadi hi nāmarūpe na vyākriyete tadā asyātmano nirupādhikaṁ rūpaṁ prajñānaghanākhyaṁ na pratikhyāyeta (...for the sake of making known; indeed, if nāmarūpa were not made manifest, then the attributeless form of this ātman having the appellation of Faultness Knowledge, would not apprehended.). It is a more than taxing paradox, and seems to imply that the unmanifested primordial state, though it is causally more proximate to Brahman, is less conduicive to the possibility of knowledge about Brahman. In any event, it is this possibility that allows for the ativādin (the beyond-talker) who is capable of perceiving that when anyone speaks, he speaks at all times and through all his words only of prāna as existing beyond that which begins with name and ends with hope (taṁ cet brūyustaṁ yadyevamativādinaṁ sarvadā sarvaiḥ śabdairnāmādyāśantamatītya vartamānaṁ prānamevaṁ vadantamevaṁ paśyantam - CUB. VII. 15. 4). The ativādin is one who has the tendency of going beyond all other things in his speech (ativādī atītya sarvānanyānvaditum śīlamasyetyativādī - MUB. III. 1. 4) and for example says things like: 'I am the ātman, the prāna of the universe.' (jagataḥ prāna ātmāham - CUB. VII. 15. 4). The ativādin therefore, is someone who seeks to leave everyone behind in his speech, he seeks to apply his words to objects beyond their conventional signification. However, once the goal (Brahman) of all this beyond-speaking is reached (and thus beyond-speaking is still approaching Brahman in terms of nāmarūpa) the need for beyond-speaking passes away: sarvaṁ vadātmaiva nānyadastīti dṛṣṭam, tadā kiṁ hyasāvatītya vadet (Once it has been seen that everything is only ātman and nothing other, then what indeed may he, having gone beyond, speak? - MUB. III. 1. 4). Again for the very reason that cannot speak about nāmarūpa in terms of Brahman (tattvānyatva).

First of all, one can easily notice that there is no lack of words that somehow stand for or represent Brahman, as the highest Absolute, in Śaṅkara's writings as well as in the body of those works upon which he comments. Perhaps the most common of these would fall under the category of meditations based upon symbols (pra-tīkopāsana), in which Brahman is represented by such symbols as, OM, ākāśa, the sun, etc.. Our concern here is not with the psychological implications (i.e., the technology of the cessation of the cittavṛttis) of Yoga as it is incorporated into the Advaita of Śaṅkara, but with the nature and implication of a symbol's capacity to copy Brahman[1]. In addition to this, I feel that it is both sufficient and economical to restrict this particular phase of our investigation to the single most outstanding one of these meditational symbols, namely, OM[2].

Śaṅkara refers to OM as the best name for paramātman[3], sta-

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1 The one distinguishing character that the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system has indelibly imprinted on almost the whole of Indian Thought is the identification of soteriological endeavour with psycho-cosmic regression. One who is in search of the final goal must, so to speak, go against the grain of the cosmos (macrocosmically prapañca and microcosmiccally the stratified jīva) and the order of its original formation. This seems to be the spirit of Śaṅkara's introductory comments to CU.: tānyetānyupāsanāni sattvaśuddhikaratvena vastutāttvāvabhāsakatvādadvaitajñānopakārakāṇi (These meditations are aids to the knowledge of non-duality by causing the purification of the sattva thereby manifesting reality.). Compare also, his Introduction to IUB..

2 The two most definitive explanations of this symbol occur in the twelve verses of MaU. and PU. V. 2-7. Among other similar meditational symbols one may consider "da" at BUB. V. 2. 1-3, "hṛdaya" at BUB. V. 3. 1, "satya" at BUB. V. 4. 1 and V. 5. 1, the gāyatrī at BUB. B. 14. 1-3, pañcagnāyah at BUB. VI. 2. 9-12, "ka" and "kha" CUB. IV. 11. 1, tadvana KeUB IV. 6, jyotis at BSB. I. 1. 24, etc..

3 omityetadakṣaram paramātmano 'bhidhānam nediṣṭam - CUB. I. 1. 1.

ting the following at BUB. V. 1. 1: yadyapi brahmātmādiśabdā brahmaṇo vācakāḥ, tathāpi śrutipramāṇyādbrahmaṇo nedistamabhidhānamoṁkāraḥ(Though words such as Brahman, ātman, etc., are words that signify Brahman, still on account of that which relates to the authority of śruti, OM is the best name for Brahman.)[1]. Though this is quite clear, the problem that it gives rise to is even more obvious, namely: 'In what way can OM, as a name, point out a transcendent non-dual Absolute that nowhere exists in the world as an isolated object capable of being pointed out?'. In attempting to answer this we must keep several things in mind. Meditation for Śaṅkara was above all a means (sādhana) to a goal and never an end in itself[2], thus it is often referred to by Śaṅkara as a vehicle for persons of dull intellect[3] and as producing results that were of only a negative or

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1 The identification of OM with Brahman is quite plentiful throughout the works that concern us. For example, KU. I. 2. 15 (omityetat), 16 (etaddhyevākṣaraṁ brahma....), CUB. I. 1. 3 (paramātmapratīkatvāt), TUB. I. 8. 1 (omityetacchabdarūpaṁ brahmeti manasā dhārayedupasīta), MaU. 8 (so 'yamātmādhyakṣaramoṁkāro 'dhimātram), BG. X. 25 (girāmasmyekamakṣaram).

2 As at BUB. V. 1. 1: tasmāddhyānasādhanatvenaiva ihoṁkārasabdasyopadeśa (Thus the symbol OM is taught only as the sādhana [means of accomplishing] meditation.). Meditation itself, is seen only as an activity of the sense organs at BUB. I. 3. 2: atra copāsanāyāḥ karmaṇaśca kartṛtvena vāgādaya eva vivakṣyante (Here, vāc and the rest of the organs alone are being spoken of as the agents of meditation and action.). See also the Pratīkādhikaraṇa of BSB., viz., BSB. IV. 1. 4 f..

3 Śaṅkara recognizes such defficiencies in the intellects of some people in a few places. At CUB. VIII. 9. 2. he states: svacittaguṇadoṣavaśādeva hi śabdārthāvadhāraṇam tulye 'pi (For people determine meanings of words in accordance with the capacity or incapacity of their intellects though they hear the very same thing); MaUB 12 meditation on OM is considered by Śaṅkara to be a great help to men of dull or average intellect (mandamadhyamadhīyam). A similar statement is also made at BGB. VIII. 11, where OM as a symbol of parabrahman is said to be meant for people of dull and average intellect (mandamadhyamabuddhi). Cf., BGB. X. 20.

or lower in nature when compared with Brahman realisation[1]. Therefore, meditation, according to the writings of Śaṅkara with which we are concerned, is only, so to speak, a pseudo-science that stands in an ancillary relationship to brahmajijñāsā.

In the light of this we can begin this brief investigation by examining a quotation from PUB. V. 2[2]:

> Indeed the parabrahman is not suitable for any designation upalakṣana by words etc., on account of its lack of distinguishing marks, and it is incapable of being explored [or understood] by the mind alone, because it is beyond the range of the sense organs. However, to those who are meditators on OM, which has the intention of Brahman caused to have been fixed on it through bhakti and which is similar to the images of Viṣṇu etc., that Brahman becomes distinct [or reveals itself]. This is understood on the basis of scriptural authority and such also is the aparabrahman. Therefore "Both the para and apara Brahman which are the OM.", is applied figuratively.

This passage seems to indicate that even though Brahman is not pos-

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1 Lower in the sense that only the world of hiranyagarbha is attained, as at BUB. V. 10. 1, by meditation, or that mere longevity (āyus) is what is sought to be gained (BUB. IV. 4. 16). This is brought out even more strongly in the Preamble to TUB. II. 1. 1, with the following statement: na caitāvatāśesatah saṃsārabījasyopamardanam.... (And by so much [meditation] there is no final destruction of the seeds of saṃsāra.). Similarly at CUB. V. 10. 2 we find that meditation results in only a relative immortality and not real liberation (sāpekṣameva cāmṛtatvam na sākṣānmokṣa), and in the Introduction to CUB. I. 1. 1 we find that meditation brings about results which only aproximate absolute emancipation (kaivalyasamnikṛṣṭaphalāni). If anything, meditation is only preparatory in relationship to brahmavidyā (see BUB. I. 4. 1), and not at all indispensable in its attainment.

2 paraṃ hi brahma śabdādyupalakṣaṇānarhaṃ sarvadharmaviśeṣavarjitamato na śakyamatīndriyagocaratvātkevalena manasāvagāhitum. oṃkāre tu viṣṇvādipratimāsthanīye bhaktyāveśitabrahmabhāve dhyāyināṃ tatprasīdatītyavagamyate śāstraprāmāṇyāttathāparaṃ ca brahma. tasmātparaṃ cāparaṃ ca brahma yadoṃkāra ityupacaryate. The whole of the fifth praśna is concerned with meditation on OM, especially with the individual component letters.

sessed of qualities that are conduicive to metaphorical representation, it is somehow still appropriated into the conceptual sphere, and the key notion in this whole endeavour is that it is all done figuratively (upacaryate). Another thing that must be noticed is that Brahman itself never becomes directly involved in the process, that is to say, we are constantly operating within a closed circle, for the intention of Brahman (brahmabhāva) which is fixed on OM is in itself only a function of nāmarūpa. These two points may be taken as almost paradigmatic of all symbolic descriptions of Brahman for the purpose of meditiation, and even all symbolic representation of Brahman in general.

Though Śaṅkara sometimes describes the relationship between symbol and Brahman as being between two different things[1], and though he often says that the symbolic image is identical with Brahman[2], I think that in the end the relationship has to be seen as analogous to that relationship which is used by Śaṅkara to account for the false apprehension of given existence in its psycho-cosmolo-

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1 As at BUB. I. 4. 10: anyasya hyanyatve sampatkriyate naikatve (The [meditation on] concord is done on difference with another, not on unity.). In other words, if the two things that were being symbolically compared were identical there would be no scope at all for symbolic comparison. Similarly at BUB. I. 3. 1: ālambanatvena hi nāmādipratipattiḥ pratimādivadeva, na tu nāmādyeva brahmeti (The assertion of name etc. is because of dependence [on something, i.e., as a means of support], just like an image [of a deity], but name etc., are not Brahman.). Cf., CUB. I. 1. 1.

2 This is implied for example in the last phrase belonging to the quotation from PUB. V. 2, on the previous page. In defining OM as a pratīka of Brahman BUB. V. 1. 1, sates the following: yathā viṣṇvādipratimābhedena, evamoṁkāra brahmeti pratipattavyaḥ (Just as the images of Viṣṇu and the other gods are not different [from the respective god], so is OM to be understood as [identical with] Brahman.). Cf., CUB. VII. 1. 4.

gical capacity, namely adhyāsa (superimposition)[1]. In respect to this we find such language as, "...[the meditator] causes [Brahman] to enter into OM." (oṁkāre aveśayati - BUB. V. 1. 1), or, "The notion of Brahman should be superimposed on āditya and the rest." (brahmadṛṣṭirevādityādiṣu syāditi - BSB. IV. 1. 5) yet, the type of superimposition that is resorted to in meditational practice is not regarded by Śaṅkara as being of the same erroneous nature that adhyāsa itself is[2], which therefore makes some indirect contribution to the knowledge of parabrahman possible.

The necessity for this whole process of superimposition is fully explained by Śaṅkara at BSB. IV. 1. 5 (of which I supply Gambhirananda's translation[3]), wherein he discusses the sense in which the word Brahman should be taken when one is confronted with such statements as ādityo brahma (The sun is Brahman.), and so on. Śaṅkara states:

> Now, because the words sun (āditya) etc. occur first, their primary meanings [mukhyā vṛtti] have to be ac- to be accepted, for that creates no difficulty. And while the intellect remains occupied with these words in their primary senses, the word Brahman makes its appearance in these sentences at a later stage. But

1 For an explanation of adhyāsa consult Śaṅkara's 'Introduction' to BSB.. An interesting parallel is made by Śaṅkara, between OM and ātman, in his introductiory remarks to MaUB. concerning the concept of adhyāsa. In this latter reference OM is said to be the substratum for the illusion of the manifest universe of speech (vākprapañca) in the same way that the ātman is so of such illusions (vikalpa) as prāṇa, or in the same manner as the rope is of the illusory snake.

2 BUB. I. 3. I: yathā sthāṇāvanirjñāte na sthāṇuriti, puruṣa evāyam iti pratipadyate vitparītam, na tu tathā nāmādau brahmadṛṣṭirviparītam. Cf., also BGB. XVIII. 66 where the difference between gauṇapratyaya and mithyāpratyaya is clearly brought out.

3 Swami Gambhirananda trans., Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1972.

> since the word Brahman, in its primary sense, cannot stand in apposition [sāmānādhikaranya] with the sun etc., the only remaining conclusion that stands affirmed is that the intention here is to prescribe the superimposition of the idea of Brahman (brahmadrsti) [1].

One can easily recognise the way in which this explanation, that pertains essentially to the problem of meditation, has become a function of the problem of language in a very specific sense. The central point of the passage is that the Brahman upon which the meditation is concentrated is not the parabrahman itself, but only a notion of that Brahman (brahmadrsti) which is superimposed upon, and thus characterised by, a readily accessible object such as the sun. Śaṅkara is not clear as to what he intends this concept of brahmadrsti to stand for, it can, more than likely, be taken as a synonym for sagunabrahman, the qualified or conceptualized Brahman, which because it is so, can be worked into the whole process of further and varied meditational predication. However, what is clear is that in order allow this organic meditational enterprise to pursue its ends, Śaṅkara must accept the fact that words and notions are not necessarily restricted to their face-value meanings (mukhyārtha) but also possess extreemly fluid secondary senses (laksanārtha) and thus permit the predication of one thing by something which could be quite different from it [2].

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1 prāthamyāccādityādiśabdānām mukhyārthatvamavirodhādgrahītavyam. taiḥ svārthavrttibhiravaruddhāyām buddhau paścādavatarato brahmaśabdasya mukhyayā vrttyā sāmānādhikaranyasambhavādbrahmadrstividhānārthataivāvatisthate.

2 For explanations of the nature and use of primary and secondary sense in Vedānta, consult Vedāntaparibhāsa, Chpt. IV, as well as V. A. R. Sastri's "Mukhya and Gauna Words in Language", BDCRI. Vol. XIV #3, pp. 183-194, which follows Bartrhari on the subject.

Brahman therefore becomes speakable, not in a direct sense, but in an implied or indirect sense by means of these figurative meditations. In order to finally complete the circle, Śaṅkara seems to make one more progression through analogical extrapolation and produces what appears to be a concrete inference, and in terms of Advaita perhaps the essential inference, concerning Brahman, namely that Brahman is a real entity at the base of all this figurative expression. He states this at _BUB_. I. 3. 1 in the following words:

> ...and on account of the fact that there is a reliance of the secondary sense on the primary. Since the _pañcāgni_ form of fire [comes] from [its] secondary sense [_gaunatva_] there is [evidence for something] which possesses real existence and is the primary sense [_mukhya_] of fire, similarly, since the names _etc_. of Brahman exist on account of secondary sense, there is evidence for the real existence [_sadbhāva_] of Brahman in the primary sense.[1]

With this, primary and secondary meaning take on directly ontological implications, so that even though all meditation upon Brahman is done figuratively, that is never directly touching the primary sense of the word Brahman, it still somehow depends upon the primary sense of Brahman or assumes it in its functioning.

If we move on now to a consideration of the way in which words as units of language are taken by Śaṅkara to apply to _parabrahman_, we will find that we are simply dealing with an extension of the above meditational problem, since Brahman can still not be in any way directly indicated by these words, but only indirectly

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1 _mukhyapeksatvācca gaunatvasya. pañcāgnyādisu cāgnitvādergaunatvāt mukhyāgnyādisadbhāvavannāmādisu brahmatvasya gaunatvānmukhyabrahmasadbhāvopapattih_. _Cf_., also the analogy of the relationship between the lines of the _akāra_ and the true _akāra_ presented at _BSB_. II. 1. 14.

indicated by them[1]. Our concern in this section has not been to explain the way in which words signify as constituents of nāmārupa in the given world, but the way in which they are at all capable of contributing to our understanding of the Absolute. Very briefly we may sum up the problem in the following manner: words function on the given plane according to their ability to, at the same time, indicate the general universal (jāti) and the particular mode of that universal, namely, the individual (vyakti), in respect to this, how are such words capable of signifying parabrahman which in its transendence escapes any universal category and individual determination?[2]. The answer to this seems to be that words have to be elevated up from their capacity to signify concretely (mukhyāvṛtti)[3] so that they might indirectly indicate (lakṣaṇāvṛtti) that which is sought after.

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1 That is, parokṣābhidhāna, as at BUB. II. 3. 3. In the opening sentence of this paragraph I do not mean to imply that historically the problem of Brahman-predication arose out of meditational preoccupation with Brahman, on the contrary, it can stand on its own within the context of the history of Sanskrit philosophy of language (in the sense that this term is employed by J. F. Stall, in his "Sanskrit Philosophy of Language", Current Trends in Linguistics, Vol. 5, 1967, pp. 499-531), and in fact, in doing so it subsumes the meditational problem under this context. This is the reason, perhaps, that Śaṅkara resorts to descriptions of the primary and secondary capacities of words in order to finally resolve this meditational problem.

2 See Richard de Smet, "Langage et connaissance de l'Absolu chez Çaṁkara", Revue Philosophiqe de Louvain, Vol. 52, 1954, pp. 31-77, where on pp. 36-37 he sets out this generality. This paper is the most comprehesive single study of Śaṅkara's thoughts on language. However, at BSB. I. 3. 28, Sankara does seem to place an emphasis on the universal: ākṛtibhiśca śabdānāṁ saṁbandhaḥ, na vyaktibhiḥ. Cf., also BGB. XIII. 12.

3 Synonyms of this term seem to be presented at BUB. III. 4. 1, namely, sākṣāt (visibly evident), avyavahita (un obstructed), aparokṣāt (immediate), and agauṇa (primary).

Of the types of secondary implications that were acknowledged by post-Śaṅkara Advaita[1], Śaṅkara himself appears to be employing jahadajahallakṣaṇā in his application of language to parabrahman[1]. In this capacity, a word yields an indirect description by simultaneously excluding as well as retaining a portion of its primary sense, as for example in the phrase "This is that brahmin" (uttered in recognition of a bald and rotund brahmin presently before you, who you recognise to be one and the same person you had encountered years previously as a lean man with a full head of hair.) where the words "this" and "that" retain the essential identity of the person and discard the peripheral and accidental characteristics (upalakṣaṇā) of his baldness, leanness, etc., in both instances[2]. If we apply this explanation of jahadajahallakṣaṇā to the well known mahāvākya 'tattvamasi' ("That thou art.") we will find that the words tat and tvam both discard the portion of their primary sense that conveys universal "thatness" (Īśvaratva) and universal "thisness" (jīvatva) and retains that portion which asserts the identity of the consciousness that binds the two together[3]. As one can see this is far from the tautology that often is forced upon the phrase by some interpreters.

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1 For the other two types of lakṣaṇā, see de Smet, "Langage...", pp. 39-42, and for further amplification, Datta, The Six Ways of Knowing, pp. 289 ff.. Briefly the others are ajahallakṣaṇā in which the word without abandoning any part of its primary sense signifies the secondary sense which is connected with that former primary sense (i.e., both senses are taken together) and jahallakṣaṇā in which the word totally abandons its primary sense and signifies a secondary sense metaphorically.

2 The example is from S. V. S. Sastri's, "Sureśvara", in Preceptors of Advaita, T. M. P. Mahadevan ed., Secunderabad, 1968, pp. 70-74.

3 See S. V. S. Sastri, "Sureśvara", p. 73.

Richard de Smet[1] sees the interpretation of these various statements which attempt to describe Absolute Reality as being comprised of three stages or phases:

> 1) <u>une phase d'affirmation encore confuse (adhyāropa); la proposition y présente les notions positives signifiées directement par ses termes, en même temps qu'apparaît l'impossibilité de retenir entièrement cette signification direct;</u>
> 2) <u>une phase de négation (apavāda), durant laquelle le mode fini et imparfait selon lequel ces notions sont réalisées par leurs objets premiers est définitivement exclu ("neti neti": ce n'est pas ainsi, ce n'est pas ainsi);</u>
> 3) <u>une phase de transmutation élevante (laksanā) qui aboutit à affirmer l'identité parfaite dans un sujet unique des notions exprimées par les termes, mais cette fois selon le mode suprême d'actuation qui leur est propre dans ce sujet absolument parfait.</u>

This is the process eventually gives recourse to the final <u>jahadajahallaksanā</u> interpretation of such statements as <u>tattvamasi</u>. At first glance one is compelled to reject such statements as the <u>mahāvākyāni</u>, not out of the fact that they are grammatically incorrect, (for they are not so), but out of the fact that there appears to be some semantical incongruity, that is, some defect in the meaning or purport (<u>tātparya</u>) of the statement. However, that which undergoes such rejection, and rightly so, is merely the face-value (<u>mukhya</u>) sense of the statement, and here we have de Smet's first phase.

At this point, according to de Smet, one realizes also the limitation of all objectifying and face-value predication in its possible application to the Absolute Brahman. This second or <u>apavāda</u> (denial) phase is simply an intemediary phase which heuristically contributes to the inquirer's metaphysical orientation but in itself

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1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", pp. 56-57.

cannot be the last word on Brahman. As he himself puts it: "L'avantage de cette voie purement négative (apavādamārga) est simple-propédeutique. Elle est nécessaire mais ne peut suffire."[1]. Yet, it seems to me that such negative definitions of Brahman are more than mere intermediary stages in the understanding of parabrahman, for they too can be taken as an indirect definition (lakṣaṇā)[2] of Brahman which still implies the existence of a positive entity and perhaps even stands as a heuristic counter-pole to the concept of anirvacanīya (according to which nāmarūpa cannot be defined in terms Brahman).

In any event, what does become evident to the inquirer is that this semantic incongruity must somehow be resolved, and since it cannot be resolved on the primary (mukhya) level, the inquirer is compelled to take recourse to the implied sense (lakṣaṇārtha). Naturally, this is not, in the main, an immediate and intuitive process[3] as we find out by again consulting de Smet[4]:

> Lorsque le sens direct est impossible, l'exégète doit se guider sur le context (prakarana) pour déterminer auquel des divers sens secondaires possibles le texte doit être entendu. Cette règle est traditionelle dans l'Ecole de la Mīmāṅsā [MS. I. 4. 9; II. 3. 24; etc.] et Çamkara s'y conforme entièrement [BSB. I. 4. 9; BUB. I. 3. 21; etc.].

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1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 48.

2 Cf., M. Biardeau, "Quelques Réflexions sur l'Apophatisme de Śaṅkara", IIJ. Vol. III, 1957, pp. 81-101, specifically p. 98. In this paper Mme. Biardeau puts forward the speculative theory that Śaṅkara developed his explanations of negative and positive definitions of Brahman at different stages in his thought, the former being the earlier. This seems to be a bit too speculative.

3 As suggested for example at BSB. IV. 1. 2., this is the exception.

4 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 49.

> Cependant le context peut être insuffisant à éclairer le sens d'un texte. En ce cas il faut se référer au sens (artha) général de la doctrine, tel qu'il s'exprime dans la section entière, ou même dans l'ensemble des textes révélés dont l'unité du sens est un postulat de la théologie çamkarienne [BSB. III. 3. 1; PUB. IV. 5; etc.]. Cette règle traditionnelle [MU. I. 4. 30], est adoptée sans discussion par Çaṁkara [BSB. I. 1. 1; II. 3. 17; etc.].

One thus begins to undertake this resolution of the primary sense of the statement by seeking a clarification of the concepts (padārtha-viveka - BSB. IV. 1. 2) with an appeal to the context (prakaraṇa) of the statement and, in a wider sense (i.e., if prakaraṇa is insufficient), to the most unified sense of the Upaniṣads as a whole (which for Śaṅkara would be advaita).

Accompanying the above appeals, Śaṅkara, out of the fact of his close methodological ties with the Bhāṭṭa school of Mīmāṁsā, also turns to a more intelectual means of resolving a given semantic contradiction in a statement, namely, arthāpatti (postulation, i.e., the supposition of a fact in order to resolve a given contradiction)[1]. D. M. Datta[2], furnishes us with the standard example of arthāpatti taken from Vedāntaparibhāṣā: "A person who is known to fast by day is still quite stout. This stoutness cannot be accounted for, unless we suppose that he eats at night.". Its use by Sankara seems to be for the most part implicit throughout his work, alit explicitly surfaces at such places as BUB. IV. 3. 34 and BGB. XVIII. 67[3]. It would also seem that in using it in this way, Sankara

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1 See D. M. Datta, Six Ways...., pp. 237-246, for a concise exposition of this concept.

2 D. M. Datta, Six Ways...., p. 237.

3 See de Smet, "Langage...", pp. 50 f..

would most likely employ it only in the light of prakaraṇa etc., and never independantly.

These reasons, therefore lead the inquirer towards an implementation of jahadajahallakṣaṇā mode of interpretation, or in other words he allows the words of these identity statmements (mahāvākyāni) to function in their secondary semantic capacity (lakṣaṇārtha). Jahadajahallakṣaṇā, is of course the most appropriate type of secondary signification for Śaṅkara to choose, since it mirrors in language his metaphysic, or better yet, his ontology as viewed form the lower standpoint (vyavahāra); that is to say, from this standpoint Śaṅkara is not prepared to completely give up the reality of given existence, nor is he quite ready to endow it with the lable of 'that which is real', and thus in talking about given existence Śaṅkara retains a portion of its mukhyârtha (viz., that it is real in the sense that it is experienced) and discards another poriton of it (viz. that it is real in the sense of ultimately being that which is)[1]. More clarification of this might be supplied if we contrast it with Sureśvara's approach, who since he holds to ābhāsavāda (i.e., the transformation of the Absolute is false and indeterminable in its entirety[2]) appropriately employs a jahallakṣaṇā interpreta-

1 Though Śaṅkara himself nowhere appends a name to his doctrine of illusory transformation of Brahman, a term which became prominent in later Advaita, namely, vivartavāda is often used to describe it. J. F. Stall ("Sanksrit Philosophy...", p. 520) makes the following interesting remark which similarly connects language with metaphysics: "...the Prātiśākhya emphasis on pariṇāma 'transformation' and the Pāṇinīya emphasis on ādeśa 'substitution' may be the predecessors, respectively, of the Sāṁkhya pariṇāmavāda (... the effect is a transformation of the cause) and the Advaita vivartavāda (...the effect is an illusory superposition on the cause).

2 See NS. II. 53, commentary.

tion of "tattvamasi", so that as in NS. III. 77, the primary senses of "tat" and "tvam" are completely discarded.

The speakability of Brahman encountered through an analysis of the mahāvākyāni must therefore be seen as of a different order than that speakability of Brahman attained through meditational symbols[1]. In the latter case the speakability of Brahman simply indicates, and indirectly so, that Brahman is a real entity (sadbhāva), in effect, a thing which is to be known (jñeya); in the former, the possibility for the actual realisation (anubhava) is itself presented as a speakability of Brahman.

However, Śaṅkara also notes at BSB. I. 3. 25 that the identity statements of the mahāvākyāni are not the only type of vedāntavākya (this term seems to be used here to mean sentences about Brahman) for sometimes they are also intent upon defining the nature of Brahman[2]. Therefore before closing this portion of our study we shall have to briefly take into account this latter type of speaking about Brahman.

Of the types of statements which purport to supply definitions (lakṣaṇa) of Brahman, two broad categoriztions are most often made, and we provide K. S. Murty's summary account of them[3]:

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1 As at BSB. IV. 1. 3: atah pratīkaśrutivairūpyādabhedapratipattih, bhedadṛṣṭyapavādācca (Thus, there is an assertion of non-difference in [sentences such as the mahāvākyāni] on account of their dissimilarity to scriptural texts concerned with meditational symbols, as well as on account of the denial of the notion of difference.).

2 dvirūpā hi vedāntavākyānām pravṛttih, kvacitparamātmasvarūpanirūpanaparā, kvacidvijñānātmanah paramātmaikatvopadeśaparā.

3 K. S. Murty, Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta, New York, 1959, pp. 74-75.

(a) essential (svarūpa) non-relational definitions of Brahman, e.g., 'Brahman is reality, knowledge and infinity'; and (b) accidental (tatastha) definitions of Brahman based on some false attribution (adhyāropa-upalaksana), e.g., 'Brahman is that from which beings are generated'. The latter is a tatastha definition, because it does not matter whether creatorship is attributed to Brahman or not; for inspite of all such attributions Brahman remains pure and indifferent (tatastha).

The latter of these, namely, the tatasthalaksana occurs for example at BSB. I. 1. 2 and can, as de Smet[1] indicates, be transformed into a svarūpalaksana in some instances. Still, our concern here will be only with the svarūpalaksana, since it is the only type that is, in essence, a real definition of Brahman.

A svarūpalaksana of Brahman is considered to be nirapeksa (non-relational) and akhandārthaka (referring to an object which is without parts)[2]; this is perhaps best explained by referring to the best known svarūpalaksana of Brahman and which is analysed at length in TUB. II. 1. 1, namely, satyam jñānamanantam brahma (that Brahman which is reality, knowledge, and infinity).

First of all, these three predicates are not taken by Śankara to stand for a set of respective qualities possessed by Brahman, instead they are simply a definition of Brahman in the sense that they demarcate Brahman as a noun from all other nouns[3]. What seems

1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 60.

2 See R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 59. In this paper de Smet also provides a translation with a few notes of the relevant portion of TUB. II. 1. 1. See also S. S. Suryana Rayana Sastri's "Akhandārtha", SS., 1961, pp. 186-190.

3 yasmāllaksanārthapradhānāni viśesanāni, na viśesanapradhānānyeva ...samānajātīyebhya evam nivartakāni viśesanāni viśesyasya, laksanam tu sarvata eva....

to be significant here, is that since Brahman does not belong to any *jāti* (class or universal), *satyam etc.*, cannot be taken as qualifiers of Brahman but only as an essential definition of it. In the light of this each of the three words is not related in any semantical way to either of the others (*na parasparam sambadhyante*) but only to the word Brahman, and this is what makes it a *nirapekṣa-lakṣaṇa* (non-relational definition)[1].

Thus the whole phrase revolves on the word "*brahma*" and not any of the discriminating words, and the semantic content of the phrase taken in this way has again to be gotten at, through *jahadajahallakṣaṇa*[2]. In other words, *satyam*, *jñānam*, *anantam*, and even the word Brahman, cannot completely give up their original senses (*svārtha*), for then there would be no essential demarcation of Brahman from other nouns. Similarly, the context (*prakaraṇa*) of the statement, *etc.*, show us that we cannot simply hold to the primary sense of the three words that seek to define Brahman, not to mention the fact that we would again run into that semantical incongruity that we encountered when dealing with a *mahāvākya* strictly in terms of its primary sense (*mukhyārtha*). It is in this sense that we find Śaṅkara stating (still at *TUB*. II. 1. 1) the following: *tathāpi tadābhāsavācakena buddhidharmaviṣayeṇa jñānaśabdena tallakṣyate, na tūcyate* (Even so, [Brahman] is indicated indirectly, but not directly signified, by the word *jñāna* which pertains [in its primary

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1 *TUB*. I. 1. 1: *ata ekaiko viśeṣaṇaśabdaḥ parasparaṃ nirapekṣo brahmaśabdena sambadhyate....*

2 See de Smet, "Langage...", p. 66.

sense] to that characterised by buddhi [intellect] and signifying the mere appearance of that [Brahman].).

Lastly, since this phrase is essentially a non-relational definition (nirapeksalaksana), that is, a definition in which there is no relation between each of its attributive components, it is capable of mirroring and relating to a thing, such as Brahman, which is itself inherently partless (akhanda). Thus "satyaṁ jñānamanantaṁ brahma", is a statement which is possessed of a sense which is whole and indivisible; it is an akhandārtha and an essential defintion (svarūpalaksana) of Brahman.

In conclusion, this segment has endeavoured to present the nature and capacity of language, as it stands in relation to Brahman, within Śaṅkara's system of philosophizing. More specifically, we have dealt with the problem of the speakability of Brahman in the light of the fact that both language (nāmarūpa) and Brahman are of different ontological orders, and have found, that inspite of this disparity Brahman is speakable in two essential and indispensable ways, namely, in terms of mahāvākyāni such as "tattvamasi" and in terms of svarūpalaksanāni such as "satyaṁ jñānamanantaṁ brahma". All this was done in the context of Śaṅkara's philosophizing as an intellectual response abstracted from his initial and necessary hermeneutical response, that is, in the context of a response constructed moreso out of thought in itself rather than exegesis, and yet one that is never completely independent of scriptural exegesis — in other words in the context of Śaṅkara's systematic ontology.

Further, in respect to both the hermeneutical response and

the intellectual response in the way that it stands as an organic whole in Śaṅkara's thought, one must conclude that language must be described as a positive concept. This is visible, of course, in two basic notions that are crucial to Śaṅkara Advaita: (a) that language as revealed language (*śruti*) is the essential matrix of insight into 'that which really is' (Brahman) and that as such it is also the necessary foundation and catalyst for the whole enterprise of becoming in Śaṅkara Advaita, the aim of which is the realization (*anubhava*) of Brahman; (b) that although Brahman is completely beyond the reach of language in any direct sense (*mukhyārtha*), it is nontheless speakable in terms of the *mahāvākyāni* and *svarūpalakṣaṇāni* (whose sense is *akhaṇḍārtha*).

Such a positive quality in Śaṅkara's conceptualization of language, on account of the revealed nature of that language, its essential indispensibility to and catalytic potency within the Advaita quest of becoming, as well its ability to delicately mirror the Absolute in certain precise occurrences, is enough reason, I think, for it to merit the appelation 'divine'.

Epilogue A

Both the first and second chapters conclude with a description of their respective conceptualizations of language as "divine". With this "Epilogue", I wish to make some very brief submissions concerning the similarities and differences between both of these predications of language as "divine".

First of all, one must say that there exists between the two an overall similarity, and this is simply out of the fact that that in both cases the definitive characteristic of language is that it <u>reveals</u> that which is to be sought after. In the former, this thing which is to be sought after is the control and manipulation of the various dynamic forces that constituted the Ṛg-vedic cosmos, while in the latter, it is the realisation (<u>anubhava</u>) of the non-dual Brahman/<u>ātman</u> as the supreme metaphysical principle. Along with this, we will notice that in both instances, language itself is also that which <u>is revealed</u>, as a manifestation of visionary potency, in effect being something which is not made by or spontaneously accessible to everyday mankind. It is maninly for this last reason that such language is fitted with various conceptual trappings, such as its eternality (<u>nityatva</u>) and non-human (<u>apauruṣeya</u>) origin, which might be referred to as "divine". However, the the importance of the fact that, in both these cases, language is characteristically positive in the sense that it, in an overall

capacity, definitely contributes to rather than detracts from, the pursuit of that which is to be sought after.

Concerning their dissimilarity, one must come to the conclusion that it is one of degree and not kind. Thus in its Ṛgvedic context, vāc (even taking into account its revelatory capacity) is most appropriately understood as 'raw power', that is to say, as perhaps the essential driving force in a dynamic cosmos completely made up of such driving forces. Its essential status stemming from the fact that it seems to have been the most important key to Vedic man's ability to harness and thus control (rather pragmatically) those powers that made up that universe. It is clearly a mythical entity, though in any demeaning sense of the word, rather than sophisticated metaphysical entity. In Śaṅkara, the concept of language becomes clearly metaphysical. It is no longer a raw utilitarian power which had to be harnessed, but a refined capacity to signify, which must be exegeted. Language (śruti) is now the key to knowledge about Brahman, which in the highest sense (paramārthasatya) involves a ralization (anubhava) of Brahman.

In any event, the concept of language in both of these cases is looked upon as that which eventually leads to the goal and is essential in attaining the goal. Therefore it appears that one would be well justified in cluding that the positive attitude towards language as represented in Ṛgveda is foundational to and characteristic of the Brahmanical tradition as it is represented by the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

Papañca and Avyākata—Possible Roots of Buddhist Linguistic Speculation

Early (Theravāda) Buddhism does not admit of an expressly systematic concern with 'language', and touches the subject only peripherally in such topics as anussava[1], avyākata, and papañca. The last two will be the specific concern of this chapter since they bear more directly upon the nature and limit of linguistic speculation than anussava.

Papañca is the Pāli expression of the Sanskrit term prapañca, which as V. Bhattacharya points out is from "...pra-√pac or or √pañc 'to spread out, make clear or evident'"[2]. Of these two

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1 For this 'inter-darśanic' questioning of 'authority' see K. N. Jayatilleke, Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge, London, Allen & Unwin, 1963, pp. 175ff., where the two main arguments set forth by the Early Buddhists against the schools founded upon such 'authority' (especially the Brahmanical schools) appear to be that such 'authority' is unnaceptable because it a) could ultimately turn out to be either true or false—the grounds on which it was accepted being no final guarantee that that this authority is true (p. 184); and b) was not the result of a personal realization, insight, or verification (pp. 190-1). As to the 'intra-darśanic' attitude of Early Buddhism to 'authority' —that is, within its own philosophy—Jayatilleke states the following in the eighth chapter of the same work: "the attitude to authority [anussava] recommended by the Buddha is not contradictory to and is in fact compatible with the attitude recommended by the Buddha towards his own statements." (p. 389). In other words, even the statements of the Buddha should not be accepted without question, although, as Jayatilleke later (pp. 400-1) points out, the latest stages of the Pali Canon do entail evidence of an emerging authoritative dogmatism.

2. V. Bhattacharya (trans.), The Āgamaśāstra of Gaudapāda, University of Calcutta, 1943, p. 43.

spellings, the Sanskrit word is used in Vedāntic works to denote an "...'expansion of the universe' or the 'visible world' (prapañcyata iti prapañcaḥ)."[1]. Such is the usage in Āgamaśāstra II. 35: "...nirvikalpo... prapañcopaśamo 'dvayaḥ."—the cessation of the expansion of the universe is without duality and undifferentiated; and also in Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya of Śaṅkara to III. ii. 21: "... Brahma is of one nature only and one in which all this variety of worldly manifestations (Prapancha) has ceased to be...."[2]. The term also occurs in two relatively late Upaniṣads—Māṇḍukya VII, again as prapañcopaśamam, and Śvetāśvatara VI. 6 as prapañcaḥ[3]— In both instances it conveys the same sense of cosmic expansion. Though the above is far from exhaustive, I feel that it provides us with the general and accepted Vedāntic usage of the term prapañca and also shows that the term has no specific or primary connection with 'language', but instead refers to a type of 'expanding cosmic evolution or differentiation from a primordial centre'.

In turning to the Pali Canon[4] usage of the term papañca,

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1 V. Bhattacharya, Āgamaśāstra, p. 43.

2 V. M. Apte (trans.), Brahma-Sūtra Shankara-Bhāshya, Bombay, Popular Book Depot, 1960, p. 590.

3 S. Radhakrishnan in his The Principal Upaniṣads, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1969, translates this occurrence rather too loosely as "world".

4 Though I say Pali Canon here, I have restricted my investigation to the Sūtta Piṭaka, since it seems to be regarded by modern scholars in general as the foremost source of Early Buddhist Doctrine.

we find that it occurs in a psychological context rather than a cosmological one. It is often translated as "impediment", as for example in MLS II p. 163 and MLS I p. 87: "This goal [niṭṭha i.e., Arhatship] is for someone... who is without delight in impediments [nippapañcārāmas... nippapañcaratino] not for someone with delight in impediments....". Woodward translates papañcitaṃ as "obsession" at KS IV p. 135, and chinna-papañca as "...those who have broken down the hindrances...." in the description of past Buddhas at KS IV p. 28. Papañca is repeatedly translated as "difficulty" by Woodward on page 168 of GS II, and in a note to its occurrence he offers the following: "Papañca is often taken to mean 'Illusion'. It means 'proxility, obstruction'.". To sum up, in these isolated occurrences of papañca in the Sūtta Piṭaka we can readily detect a negative and predominant sense of hindrance or obstruction.

Along with papañca, we commonly find a related construct, namely, papañca-sañña-saṅkhā, such as in MLS I pp. 143-45, for which Horner gives "...number of obsessions and perceptions...."; this according to his own note on page 143 follows Buddhagoṣa (Papañcasudani, II 75) who explains "saṅkhā" by koṭṭhasa ('number' or 'parts') and papañcasañña as perceptions connected with taṇhā (craving), māna (conceit), and diṭṭhi (views). Ñāṇananda[1], however, takes saṅkhā more literally as in the Sanskrit 'saṃ -√khyā' or 'calculation', citing its use in Saṃyutta Nikāya III.70 as a considered

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1 Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda, Concept and Reality (In Early Buddhist Thought, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Celon, 1971, p. 5.

example[1]. This latter interpretation of saṅkhā seems to express a more precise understanding of the psychological context in which papañca and its cognates occur, by emphasizing the word's dynamic sense of 'process'(calculation) rather than the static and misleading generality of Buddhagosa's quantifications ('number', 'parts'). As such, papañcasaññasaṅkhā[2] seems most appropriately rendered by

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1 As in the translation at KS III p. 63:

> Whatsoever of matter, bretheren, is past, ceased, changed,--that is reckoned [saṅkhā], termed and named as "has been". It is not reckoned [s.] as "is", nor is it recknoned [s.] as "will be".

This definitely does support Ñāṇananda's interpretation of the term, an interpretation which is certainly properly taken in respect to the psychological context of the term papañca.

2 In partial ancticipation of our chapter on language in Nāgārjuna, we may take into account Ñāṇananda's observance, on page 116 of his Conception, that papañcasaṅkhā and papañcasaññasaṅkhā are are conspicuously absent in Mahāyāna texts. However, prapañca itself does occur in two verses (XVIII.9 and XXXIII.15) of Mādhyamikakārikā. Stcherbatsky, when he discusses prapañca in The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa, The Hague, Mouton, 1965, takes it to mean "verbal designation(prapañca=vāk)" (p. 48), or "variety of names prapañco vak" (p. 209), in both cases implying the advent of mundane conceptualization of Nirvāṇa. On p. 91 of the same work, Stcherbatsky (in a note to Mādhamikavṛtti 11.4) states that, "...nisprapañca=anirvacanīya...[adding that here] not only words but concepts are also meant."(an identical equation occurs on p. 156). If we take this usage of prapañca in Mādhyamika Buddhism as an example of the Mahāyāna concern with it, we can see that it has clearly become associated with language. Historically speaking, for such an association to emerge, it must have been present in some rudimentary form within the Pali occurrences of the term papañca. In any case, the usage of this term in the Mādhyamikakārikās will be more pointedly discussed in the final chapter.

an English translation along the following lines: 'calculations or reckonings characterised by perceptions (saññā) of, or connected with papañca.

At this point in our investigation I think it would be best if looked at a closed occurrence of the term papañca and its complimentary construction papañcasaññasaṅkhā. With this in mind, we can find a classic usage of the two expressions in the Madhupuṇḍikasutta (MLS I. ii. 18), where the sage-recluse Kaccāna gives an exposition[1] on an anti-ontological implication previously uttered by the Buddha[2]. In doing so, Kaccāna also provides us with a schematic presentation for the Early Buddhist sequence of 'psycho-perceptual' evolution and differentaition. He states:

> Visual consciousness... arises because of eye and material shapes; the meeting of the three is sensory impingement; feelings are because of sensory impingement; what one feels one perceives; what one perceives one reasons about; what one reasons about obsesses one; what obsesses one is the origin of the number of perceptions and obsessions which assail a man in regard to material shapes cognisable by the eye, past, future, present.

This sequence is then repeated for auditory, olfactory, gustatory,

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1 This statement of Kaccana's occurs at MLS I p. 145.

2 This implication is found at MLS I p. 143, where the Buddha states:

> Whatever is the origin, monk, of the number of obsessions and perceptions [papañcasaññasaṅkhā] which assail a man, if there is nothing to rejoice at, to welcome, to catch hold of, this is itself an end of propensity to attachment... repugnance ...views... perplexity... pride... ignorance....

It simply indicates that man's given existence has no real and final substratum to it.

bodily (i.e., touch), and mental conciousness.

We can see that each of the different phassas (contacts or "sensory impingements") 'arises' out of the momentary conflagration of sensory organ, object, and sense consciousness—which, in the framework of Buddhist asatkāryavada and paticcasamuppāda[1] are mutually dependent on each other out of dynamic necessity. From phassa (contact) 'arises' vedanā (feeling), then sañña (perception), vitakka (reasoning), and finally papañca. If we were to conjecturally choose one of these 'situations' as demonstrating a probable scope or capacity for the 'onset' of what might be called language, then it would seem that vitakka or 'reasoning about' is the most appropriate. The three initial 'situations'—phassa to sañña—appear to be more elemental or crude, and rather provide backdrop for linguistic embellishment.

1. The former is the more general of the two terms and Jayatilleke (Theory, p. 453) is reluctant to apply it as a predicate of the Early Buddhist causal theory. I have come accross two papers that are very helpful in understanding the concept of paticcasamuppāda. The first is by A. C. Banerjee, entitled "Pratītyasamutpāda", and appears in Gautama Buddha (25th Centenary Volume), No Editor given, Calcutta, Calcutta Oriental press, 1956, pp. 153-56. It provides a good structural account of the technical terminology associated with the twelve nidānas. The second is A. K. Chatterjee's "Pratītyasamutpāda in Buddhist Philosophy", from his own Facets of Buddhist Thought, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1975, pp. 5-17, in which he discusses the Ābhidharmika, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra interpretations of pratītyasamutpāda. The following quotation from p. 9 of the latter article capsulates the Ābhidharmika (spec. Sautrantika) interpretation of the concept:

> The whole (sanghāta) is a mere name, a fiction, a figment of imagination. Causation obtains, not between the parts or the moments themselves. It is the law as to how the moments arise and disappear (dharmasanketa). Nothing binds these moments together; it is their very nature to succeed each other in an endless chain.

Vitakka is translated simply as "thought" by Jayatilleke (*Theory*, p. 440) as distinguished from *vicāra* or reflective thought. S. A. Aung, throughtout his translation of the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*[1] repeatedly renders these two terms as "... initial application [and] sustained application [of thought]"[2] respectively, and also further explains them in the following way: "Vitakka is the directing of concomitant properties towards the object. Vicara is the continued exercise of the mind on that object."[3]. Such an un-

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1. S. Z. Aung, *Compendium of Philosophy*, Pali Text Society, London, 1910.

2. Aung, *Compendium*, pp. 89, 95, *etc.*. In *D.* II p. 311, *vitakka* is translated as "Mental pre-occupation" with the Rhys Davids noting that, "The word is used, according to Suttanta method, not with any fine shade of psychological meaning, but in its popular sense of... 'being pre-occupied about.'". The problem with its occurrence here, is that it is given as being 'caused' by *papañca-saññā*, which is not, as the Rhys Davids note on p. 312, "An exactly similar sequence of ethical states..." as occurs in the *Madhupundikasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* I, 111, 112). The latter gives only *saññā* and not *papañcasaññā*. If we take the *Dīgha* sequence and equate *saññā* with *papañcasaññā*, then we would have to accept *saññā* in our 'onset of language' in the *Majjhima* account, however such an equation does not convey the bare awareness that seems to be implied by *saññā* as the third *khandha* (for it does not seem to lose any of this sense here). Horner at *MLS*. p. 143 notes that the *Commentary on Majjhima* defines *papañcasaññā* as "perceptions connected with obsessions, views, and craving.", this is certainly more than mere *saññā*. Therefore, I would tend to group *papañcasaññā* with *papañca*, and say that it 'arises' (going against the *Dīgha* sequence) after *vitakka*.

3. Aung, *Compendium*, p. 17. Ñāṇananda, *Concept*, p. 4, gives a similar definition following *Visuddhimagga* I pp. 142-43:

> [*vitakka* is the] onset or initial application of thought... [*vicāra* the] ...discursive aspect of the intellect has the finer sense of investigation and deliberation. It follows faithfully in the wake of *vitakka* and seeks to sustain it.

derstanding of _vitakka_ as the initial 'application of thought', coupled with the inherent human awareness of the concomittance of thought and language[1] —along with the structural similarity between thought and language[2] —may be enough to allow us to consider _vitakka_ to be a 'latent form', or an 'intermediate stage' in the sequence, of expressible language[3].

In any event, it is at this point that _papañca_ and _papañcasaññasankha_[4] 'enter in'. We have seen that _papañca_ has a literal 'root sense' that deals with 'manifold expansion outwards', and that it is taken by modern translators of the Pali Canon to intend a 'hindrance' or 'obstacle' founded upon 'mental obsession'.

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1 The Buddhist or the Vedāntin, I think, would not disagree to any great degree. Ñāṇananda, at _Concept_, p. 4 states: "... conceptual activity presupposes language, so much so that thought itself may be regarded as a form of sub-vocal speech.". There is the common Pali formula asserting the concomittance of the following triad, _kāyena vācāya manasā_, occurring for example at _Majjhima_ III.178; also at _Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad_ I. 4. 17, we find "_...mano evāsyātmā vāgjāyā..._".

2 This is not to say that everything 'thinkable' is 'speakable', nor the reverse, that everything that can be spoken is capable of being translated into thought constructs. Mystics stand as the greatest spokesmen or examples that could be incorporated to justify such an attitude.

3 By this I mean language in the sense that it appears as manifestly cognisable and communicable.

4 Up till now, the psychological stage has been set for the appearance of _papañca_, in other words, _phassa_, _sañña_, and _vitakka_, gradually provide more and more of an impetus towards this 'linguistic expansion'. This is also the level on which I would place _papañcasañña_, see note 14 above.

Juxtaposed as it is against vitakka, in our selection from the Madhupuṇḍikasutta, papañca could perhaps refer to a further or extrapolated expansion outward of the conceptualizing tendency in man, that is, after its initial onset (vitakka) and sustainment (vicāra). In this sense, though the nature of the 'expansion' denoted by vicāra is somewhat restrained and ordered, in other words, 'expansion to a limit', the expansion that is indicated by papañca seems to embody no limit at all—it is unbounded, rather than ordered, expansion. Ñāṇananda appears to support such an interpretation of the intended connotation of the term papañca when he discusses it in the context of vitakka-vicāra; he states[1] :

> Papañca... is a more comprehensive term hinting at the tendency of the worldling's imagination to break loose and run riot. If vicāra, at least relatively, denotes cosmos [i.e., ordered differention] in the mental realm, papañca seems to signify chaos.

Such a sense of 'instability' might also be supported by its occurrence at KS. IV, pp. 134-35, where papañca is used along with the following predicates, iñjitam ("something moved"), phanditam ("something wavering"), and mānagatam ("vain imagining"), to modify the erroneous phrase "ahaṁ asmi" ("I am")[2]. Clearly,

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1 Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 4. Though Ñāṇananda seems to get more than enough mileage out of the term papañca in his book, I don't think he is at all unjustified with his interpretation, in view of the pragmatic concerns (viz., soteriological) of Early Buddhism, and the framework that this forms for all of its psychological and epistemological investigations.

2 This conceit of "ahaṁ asmi" is probably the worst possible thought to occupy the aspirant's mind. Ñāṇananda, (Concept, p. 5) in reference at the Madhupuṇḍikasutta occurrence of papañca, makes this statement: "At this final stage of sense-perception [papañca], he who has hitherto been the subject now becomes the hapless object [i.e., 'victim' of papañca]." The Vedāntin would shudder at such a reaction to the assertion that 'the self is'.

the intention of the first two predicates (iñjitam and phanditam) is to convey a sense of motion, and this motion, when reflected in the latter pair (papañca and mānagatam) contributes to an over-all sense of consequential mental-proliferation, which in turn, comes to a precise head in the concept of papañca. Taken in this way, papañca demonstrates the same general 'root notion' of deliberate expansion that it does in its Vedāntic usage, with the reservation that here, p(r)apañca is on a microcosmic/psychological, rather than macrocosmological, scale.

Furthermore, in our comparison of the Vedāntic and Buddhist implementation of papañca, we may notice that while in the Vedānta, macrocosmic expansion and evolution implies an ordered series of events, the Buddhist concept of papañca weighs all of its emphasis on the unrestrained and chaotic nature of expanding conceptualization. Thus the sense of Early Buddhist papañca, in psychological and soteriological terms, is totally negative, and this negative sense is additionally compounded by its association with the three kileśas: tanhā (craving), māna (conceit), and diṭṭhi (views). Ñāṇananda[1], states:

> ...the prolificity in concepts suggested by the term papañca manifests itself through the above three main channels [tanhā, māna, diṭṭhi], so much so that the term has been traditionally associated with them.

In this way, the chaotic nature of papañca actually manifests it-

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1 Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 11, where he is following various Nikāya Commentaries.

self and defines itself in terms of the three _kileśas_.

At this point, it might not be improper to distinguish, through analogy and our association of language with _vitakka_ above (pp. 6-8), both a mental _papañca_ and a verbal _papañca_ in the sequential evolution of conception[1]. However, I do not consider this to be an earnest dichotomy, it is merely meant to indicate that the latter seems to presuppose the former activity. Verbal _papañca_ would simply mean that speech which has subordinated itself to the realms of the manifest _kileśas_, or in other words, mundane speech in general[2].

If we were to summarize what has thus far been said about _papañca_ we could state that it has, in Pali Buddhism, a triple connotation of expansion outwards, obsession, and hindrance (all especially in the realm of ideation), and that that connotation, to become directly applicable to the various modes of mundane verbal expression, needs only a minimal amount of extrapolation through the common and mediating substratum of the three _kileśas_. In this way _papañca_ exemplifies the essence of the Early Buddhist attitude

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1. Ñāṇananda, _Concept_, p. 10, makes use of the same dichotomy when he states:

> ...we see a curious distinction between the relative meanings attached to '_papañca_' when it is used with reference to the verbal and thementa1 realms respectively. Such short-hand devices as technical terms or code-words in a language help us to avoid '_verbal-papañca_', but inasmuch as they are evolved through a complex process of thought activity they may be said to presuppose a good deal of 'mental-_papañca_'.

2. The negative attitude towards mundane speech, or the fact that mundane speech, as it stands, is not quite right or 'real', is again conspicuous.

towards conceptualizing language and its various verbalised modes. In this light, the negative connotation of papañca as 'hindrance' reiterates the antagonism of the other aspects of its triple significance to the anätta metaphysic of Early Buddhism—in the sense that this metaphysic stood as a reflective soteriological corollary to the Four Noble Truths. In other words, 'expansion outwards' and 'obsession' (i.e., the reverberation of this fundamental 'expansion outwards' throughout phenominal reality so that ideas of permanence become firmly established) through mental and 'vocal-linguistic' channels, is a 'movement' directly in opposition to the individual effort of 'self-negation' that sternly forms the single soteriological pre-occupation of the Early Buddhist ideal, the Arhat.

Is this, however, true of all language as the Early Buddhists saw it? If it is, then there could be no soteriological or existential import to language at all, unless it is the implied negative import that language arising in this manner is definitely removed from 'the way things really are'. Early Buddhism, fortunately, does not leave itself adrift on the surface of such a resignation, for there do seem to be two 'psycho-verbal situations' that are definitely conduicive to the Early Buddhist 'achievement' of Nirvāṇa, and these are phenomenally apparent as belonging to the two Theravāda 'ideal individual states' namely, that of the Arahant (muni) and that of the Buddha himself. If we can investigate why they are not subject to papañca we may be able to complete our picture of the Early Buddhist attitude towards language.

First of all, the Arahant was looked upon by Pali Buddhism to be the embodiment of individual effort and determination[1], and one who through such effort had reached the apex of manifest existence. In his case 'psycho-verbal constructs' have become reduced to 'empty state' in the sense that they are characteristically free from taṇhā, māna, and diṭṭhi. For a clarification of this we again return to the Madhupuṇḍikasutta (MLS. I pp. 141-42), where this time we find the Buddha making a response to the ensuing pointed question:

> "What is the teaching of the recluse [muni], of what views [kimakkhāyī, lit., 'What does he point out or show?'] is he?
>
> "According to my teaching, sir, in the world with its devas, Māras and Brahmās, with its creation, with recluses and brahmans, with devas and men, there is no contending with anyone in the world; for which reason perceptions do not obsess that brahman as he fares along not fettered to sense-pleasures, without questionings, remorse cut off, and who is devoid of craving for becoming and non-becoming.

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1. This individual determination was severly criticised by the Mahayāna as a completely self centred attitude that exhibited perfection of only a lower order. Har Dayal, in his The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature, Delhi, 1932, p. 1f., gives us an idea of what it meant to be an Arahant:

> He was defined as one, who had eradicated the three āsravas (Pali: āsava = 'Intoxicants', sins, errors) of sense-desire, love of existence, and ignorance, and also the fourth supplementary asrava of speculative opinion. He practised the seven Factors of Enlightment (Pali: sambojjhaṅga): mindfulness, investigation, energy, joy, serenity, concentration and equanimity. He got rid of the five nīvaranas ('hindrances', 'coverings').... He freed himself from the three 'Roots of Evil': sense-desire, hatred, and delusion. He practised self restraint and concentration....

This passage makes two points regarding the Arahant's employment of 'language'. The first pertains to diṭṭhi or views—the kileśa that is perhaps most intimately connected with 'psycho-linguistic constructions'—and is displayed in the phrase, "...there is no contending with anyone in the world.". Such an attitude is echoed at KS. III p. 117, when the Buddha states, in regard to his own speech, that, "I do not dispute with the world, but the world disputes with me."[1]. What these statements seem to imply is that, in his use of language, the Arahant does not appropriate any speculative or specific dogmatic stance, for this would run counter to the anatta-anicca metaphysic in, first of all, positing a real 'holder of the view' (a real ahaṁ), and secondly, in granting some sense of permanency to the view in itself[2]. Such is also the stance (though in an explicitly existential sense) expected of the Arahant in the famous 'Parable of the Raft' (MLS. I p. 112f.), where it is emphasized by the Buddha that the Dhamma is, just like a raft, for crossing over to the other side, and not for retaining once one has crossed over.

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1 At MLS. I p. 141, note 6, we find a similar but untraced quotation: "A dhamma-speaker disputes with no one, but a speaker of non-dhamma disputes.".

2 This could well be evidence of the seed for Nāgārjuna's 'stanceless pure-criticism' as it manifests itself in the catuskoti coupled with his statement at VV. 29: "...nāsti ca mama pratijñā....".

In this way, diṭṭhi can be regarded as one of the most negative manifest extremities of papañca or, as we have come to know it, 'psycho-linguistic proliferation'; and at this point, we can afford to distinguish among three 'aspects' of diṭṭhi: micchādiṭṭhi, sammādiṭṭhi, and more indirectly, that which encompasses both the first two aspects, namely, the 'clinging on' or 'holding' to a view. Defined in terms of epistemic content micchādiṭṭhi is a false or untrue view (i.e., a view unconfirmable by pratyakṣa or anumāna) and sammādiṭṭhi one that does correspond to perceptual fact and inference[1]. The third aspect of diṭṭhi, is its fluid aspect, that which truly makes diṭṭhi a kileśa—the tendency to become attached to the actual content of the view itself (in fact, this aspect seems to be underscored by the other two kileśas, viz., taṇhā and māna; and becomes, in the clinging to sammādiṭṭhi, a doubly harmful manifestation of papañca). We see there-

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1. It is very difficult to say to what 'pramāṇas' the Early Buddhists attested, but since they were 'phenomenalists' (accepted the reality of the dharmas) it seems reasonable to say that they placed great emphasis on perception as a verifying principle; inference, however, we posit more dubiously. These are certainly the two pramāṇas accepted by the later Yogācāra Logicians such as Vasubandhu and Diṅnāga. Jayatilleke, Theory, p. 353, explains true and false beliefs in the following manner:

> ...while false propositions are considered false, when they do not correspond with or deny facts, true beliefs, conceptions or statements are said to be those which reflect or correspond with fact. The words used for true beliedfs, conceptions or statements are sammādiṭṭhi, sammāsaṅkappo and sammāvāca respectively....

This 'Positivistic' bent is certainly true of Early Buddhism.

that papañca, in its threatening proliferation, is a constant and persisting hazard, even to the adoption of sammādiṭṭhi (cf., 'The Parable of the Raft'—MLS. I p. 172 f.)

In the light of such an association of papañca and diṭṭhi, we might perhaps posit one place where papañca may be said to run more rampantly loose than usual, and in unusually excessive concentrations—the verbal debate. Here we encounter a lively exchange in the form of defense or rejection of submitted positions or views; this is the very 'stuff' that papañca is made of. The Arahant however, is free from the kileśas[1] and therefore, even posses no attachment to sammādiṭṭhi or the Dhamma, though it is true that he himself may em- 'employ' and 'entertain' such a 'position' in order to preach sammādiṭṭhi or the Dhamma and in order to refute false views (micchādiṭṭhi). As Ñāṇananda brings to our attention, "...sammā-diṭṭhi itself embodies the seed of its own transcendence, as its purpose is to purge the mind of all views inclusive of itself."[2]. Therefore,

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1 Ñāṇananda, Concept p. 34, neatly summarizes the nippanpañca- 'accomplished state' ahcieved by the Arahant when he states that:

> The data of sense experience, both precepts and concepts, which enter his mind... enter through the portals of 'thought (vitakka) but they never reverberate through the corridors of his mind as echoes of 'conceptual proliferation' by way of Craving, Conceit and Views (taṇhā-māna-diṭṭhi-papañca). They never interfere with the sublime quietude reigning within the inner recesses of the mind.

2 Ibid., p. 39.

even at the height of the debate, surrounded though he may be by a turbulent ocean of papañca, the Arahant remains aloof and inwardly silent. Again Ñāṇananda[1] provides us with a translation of a verse (Sutta Nipata 812) which appears particularly appropriate as a description of this state of nippapañca that is attained by the efforts of the Arahant: "Even as the drop of water on a lotus-leaf does not smear it, or as water that smears not the lotus flower, so aloof is the sage who does not cling to whatever he has seen, heard or cognised.".

Thus we come to the second point concerning the Arahant's 'employment' of language as described in the Buddha's answer to the question directed at him concerning the 'views' held by such a perfected being (above p. 106), namely, that the Arahant is "... not fettered to sense pleasures, without questionings....", and so on. In other words, this means that he is free from papañca[2], that is, 'psycho-linguistic proliferation', during the course of all of his activities—especially those directly related to the propagation of speech.

If we we turn now, from a consideration of the way in which 'language' was employed by the Arahant, to an investigation—along similar lines—of the Buddha himself, we would first of all have to make mention of what seems to be a subtle yet essential difference between the two, namely, that the Buddha was not only an

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1 Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 98.

2 For nippapañca, see also, Dhammapāda 93 and 254.

Arahant, but, and most importantly, the Arahant. That is to say, the Buddha was the Teacher, while all other beings in the universe were only 'followers', including even the most perfect of Arahants. He is the Teacher, because, above all, he was the Founder of the Dhamma this particular age, and it is this final characteristic that truly distinguishes a Buddha from and Arahant, for as stated at MLS. III pp. 58-59: "The Buddha renders the Path attainable when and where no other being can.".

We see that since the Buddha is an Arahant, he does not suffer from papañca in his turning of the Wheel of the Dhamma, but it must be noted that this aspect of his 'anti-' or 'ni-' papañca qualification stems, though indirectly, from mundane reality (the sphere of the kilesāni) as the progressive negation of that reality in terms of itself[1]. On the other hand, as stated previously, the Buddha is unique in existence simply because he has the capability of declaring the Dhamma for each mahākappa[2], and as such, he is con-

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1 That is, through the employment of vitakka-vicāra (applied and sustained thoughts) to gradually eliminate unwholesome mental 'states' (viz., papañca), as exemplified in the exposition provided at D. I, pp. 250 f.. The analogy that the Buddha applies towards a clarification of this 'gradual process of elimination' is one (as at MLS. I. p. 153) of a carpenter progressively driving out larger, blunt pegs with smaller and sharper ones, until in the 'state' of paññā, pegs and the act of 'driving out' are no longer needed.

2 As at MLS. III pp. 56-57:

> There is not even one monk, brahman, who is possessed in every way and in every part of all those things which the Lord was possessed, perfected one, fully Self-Awakened One. For, brahman, this Lord was one to make rise a Way that had not rised (before), to show a Way not shown (before)....

Cf., D. III p. 74.

sidered to be the manifestation of the Transendent Principle (Nibbāna). In this sense, the Buddha's *nippapañca* qualification can be interpreted as stemming from beyond the mundane realm. Thus we may recognize the Dhamma of the Buddha to be free from *papañca* in all respects and from every perspective[1].

Here, it may be interesting to point out what I see to be the major difference between the Early Buddhist concept of a 'Declaration of the Dhamma' and that understanding of 'Revelation' occuring in the Vedānta use of the term *śruti*. In the latter case what we seem to find is a 'Divine Manifestation' of revealed Truth that is carefully handed down through tradition—an adjective that

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1 In connection with the ability of the Buddha to Declare and preach the Dhamma, mention might also be made of the four *patisambhidā*(s) - (*skt.*, *pratisaṁvid*) or analytic comprehensions. These are as follows: i) *atthapatisambhidā*, a knowledge of the objects of denotation; ii) *dhamma-*, an analytic comprehension of causal conditions; iii) *nirutti-*, an analytic comprehension of definitions, or in other words etymology; iv) *patibhāna-*, an analytic insight into the preceeding three. Occuring in Pali texts such as *Points of Controversy* (*PTS.*, *i.e.*, *Kathāvatthu*), p. 179; *AN.* II p. 160; III p. 113 and p. 119, the four seem to appear merely as certain attainments or perfections of the Buddha and also other *bhikkhu*(s) (for this see S. Z. Aung and C. A. F. Davids' informative Appendix at pp. 377-382 of their *Points of Conroversy* (*PTS.*)). Of the four, perhaps the first and certainly the third can be taken as bearing on the Early Buddhist concept of language. If we couple this with the fact that in later Buddhism the four become more closely associated with a *bodhisattva* or Buddha's ability to preach the Dharma, in the sense that these four analytic comprehensions are now looked upon as prerequisites for successful and proper preaching of the Dharma (see Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sankskrit Literature*, Delhi, 1932, pp. 259-267), we can obviously take all of them as bearing directly on our concern with language. The essential question of course is: "Are these *patisambhidā*(s) to be included within *papañca* or not?". The answer to this seems to be that [illegible] not, since the four have to be taken as comprising one partless, intuitive and instantaeous comprehension (as indicated at p. 312 of A. K. Warder's, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, 1970) and not something akin to a mental proliferation.

that is frequently used to describe it is apauruṣeya, that is, 'not dependent upon man for its origin'[1]. The importance of this predication appears to be that human effort has no bearing upon a disclosure of revelation in the cosmos. The Buddha, on the other hand, came to Declare the Dhamma out of a supreme individual effort that spanned many lifetimes and that culminated itself in his existence as Gautama. It is in this connection that we find him stating at MLS. II. p. 400 the following words:

> ...I am one of those recluses and brahmans who by fully understanding dhamma of themselves only, although these truths have not been heard before [in the sense of being traditionally established], claim that... they have attained herenow to excellence and to going beyond through super-knowledge.

And further at MLS. III p. 230: "What I am talking about, monks I have heard from no other recluse or brahman; and moreover what I am talking about is known only by me myself, seen by myself and discerned by myself."[2] Therefore, it appears that, leaving metaphysical subtleties (if we can say that a speculative metaphysic exists in

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1 This concept of apauruṣeya is originated by the Mīmāṁsā (e.g., Mīmāṁsā Sutra, I. 8. 27). See also above, p. 43, n. 2.

2 It is ironical however, that by the time of the Vaibhāṣikas speculation on the concept of buddhavacana (the actual word of the Buddha), which does not seem to play a significant role at all in the Nikāyas, results in the adoption of the very predication of apauruṣeya. P. S. Jaini has the following words on this in his "The Vaibhasika Theory of Words and Meanings" BSOAS., Vol. XXII, Part 1, 1959, pp. 95-107:

> The lack of speculation on the nature of the Buddhavacana in the Pali tradition and its presence in the Vaibhāṣika school suggests that this was a later development brought about by a certain influence of other schools, particularly the Mīmāṁsakas and the Vaiyākaraṇas, who, although for different reasons, had a pri-

in the Sutta Piṭaka), the two concepts are quite different, for while the Dhamma does not exist in the cosmos until the Buddha manages to 'win' it and Declare it, the Veda seems to recur as the matrix of every creation, and even goes on to residually exist after _pralaya_[1].

Having indicated how and why the speech of the Buddha is _nippapañca_, we may now turn to another and connected aspect of his implimentation of language, namely, his silent response to the _avyākatāni_[2]. The word _avyākata_ literally signifies something that is unexplained, or as Hare indicates at _GS_. IV p. 39: "...literally

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> mary interest in the problem of words and their meanings. The Vaibhāṣikas seem to have benefited from the arguments of the early Sphoṭavādin Grammarians. But the Mīmāṃsakas seem to have exercised a far greater influence on them as is evident from the use of such expressions as _apauruṣeya_ for denoting the Buddha-_vacana_. (p. 107)

1 See above p. 43 notes 3 and 4. We might also include the following quotation from _BSB_. I. 3. 30: _pralīyamānamapi cedaṃ jagacchaktyavaśesameva pralīyate. saktimūlameva ca prabhavati; itarathākasmikatvaprasaṅgāt._ (When dissolving, this universe dissolves having as residual a [latent] potency. And it re-emerges having this potency as its root cause, or else there would follow accidental contingency.). The context of this statement seems to indicate that this potency (_Śakti_) is in effect the essential structure of the Veda itself. On the other hand the question as to whether each Buddha expounds an identical Dhamma in each world-cycle would, I think, most probably be of the same order as the _avyākatāni_.

2 The following papers specifically tackle the proble of the _avyākatāni_: Nathmal Tatia's, "The _Avyākrtas_ or Indeterminables" in _The Nava Nālandā Mahāvihāra Research Públication_, Vol. II, Patna, No Date, _ed_. Satkari Mookerjee, pp. 141-159; T. W. Organ's, "The Silence of the Buddha", _PEW_. Vol. IV. #2, July 1954, pp. 125-140; S. Radhakrishnan's, "The Teaching of Buddha by Speech and by Silence", _Hibbert Journal_, Vol. 32, 1933-34, pp. 342-356; G. M. Nagao's "The Silence of the Buddha and its Madhyamic Interpretation", _Studies in Indology and Buddhology_, _ed_. G. M. Nagao and J. Nuzawa, Hozokan Kyoto, 1955, pp. 137-151. An anthology of textual passages referring to the _avyākatāni_ occurs at pp. 550-556 of G. J. Jennings' _The Vedāntic Buddhism of the Buddha_, London, 1948.

(*a-vi-ā-kar*) unexpounded, unanalyzed, undefined."[1]. We are particularly interested in the term as a designation or synonym for a set of ten[2] questions addressed to the Buddha and arranged, as for example in the *Vacchagotta Saṁyuttaṁ* (*SN*. III p. 258[3]), as follows:

> Is the world eternal? Or is the world not eternal? Is the world finite? Or is the world infinite? Is the self the same as the body? Or are the self and the body two different things? Does the Tathāgata exist after death? Or does the Tathāgata not exist after death? Or does the Tathāgata both exist and not exist after death? Or does the Tathāgata neither exist or not exist after death?

Clearly the questions are of a purely speculative nature, that is, they are concerned with topics that, at best, can only produce debatable conclusions — not simply in the Buddhist context but in the context of all the different Indian schools of that day.

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1 I am not of the opinion that the middle of these three predicates, *i.e.*, "unanalyzed", is really a suitable translation for *avyākata* in the context of the ten questions. The Buddha, for example, though he is questioned about making a pronouncement on the questions in the form of expounding on or defining them, is not expected to analyze them, or in other words, to enter into an investigation of them as a *bhikkhu* might.

2 N. Tatia, in his "The *Avyākrtas*...", p. 141 n. 1, explains the discrepancy in numbering between Early and Later Buddhism:

> These are *ten* according to the enumeration in the Pāli canon (see *Majjhima-Nikāya*, Suttas 63, 72) and *fourteen* according to the *Prasannapadā* of Candrakīrti (p. 446, Poussin's edition). [Certain] questions... are not found in the Pāli canon in the present context, though the same are available in other parts of the canon in a different context. The number is elastic....

3 *Sassato loko ti vā Asassato loko ti vā. Antavā loko ti vā Anantavā loko ti vā. Tam jīvam tam sarīranti vā Aññam jīvam aññam sarīranti vā. Hoti tathāgato param maranā ti vā. Na hoti tathāgato param maranā ti vā. Hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato param maranā ti vā. Nevā hoti na na hoti tathāgato param maranā ti vā ti.*

As such speculative questions, they are dependent upon a structured dialectical framework, and this fully manifests itself in the last, or "tathāgata", set of questions[1]. We can easily recognize this structure as echoing the logical symmetry of Nāgārjuna's catuṣkoṭi. In this part of our investigation we will attempt to discover the nature of the contribution that the avyākatāni can be said to make in terms of the Early Buddhist attitude towards, or concern with, language—especially in the light of the Buddha's silent response to them, since that is essentially what imparts significance to them.

The two most informative occurrences of the avyākatāni seem to be in the Brahmajālasutta (at D. I pp. 39-45) and in the Cūlamāluṅkyasutta (MLS. II pp. 97-101). In the first we do not encounter the standard topics (such as, the eternality of the cosmos, etc. as given in the Vacchagotta Saṁyuttaṁ) of the avyākatāni, but such notions as the existence of another world or not etc.; the existence of Chance Beings (opapātikā) or not etc., the existence of the fruit of good and bad actions or not etc., with the tathāgata topic remaining as the only constant (see D. I pp. 39-40). What this in fact seems to indicate, is that the topics of the avyākatāni are in themselves only secondary to the form of their logical presentation as assertion, negation, conjunction and disjunction[2]. This is even further borne out by the context in which these avyā-

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1 As at T. R. V. Murti, Philosophy, p. 38, we cannot see why all of the questions could not follow the same fourfold formulation.

2 Here the avyākatāni are not presented as questions, but as the possibility of views on these topics held by various speculators.

katāni appear, namely, the presentation of sixty-two[1] varying theories or viewpoints concerning various metaphysical topics, which seem to be taken as characterizing the gamut of Indian philosophic-religious speculation of the time.

Taking this into account, the characteristically structured avyākatāni specifically appear designated under the type of view held by the so-called "Eel-Wrigglers" (amarāvikkhepikā), who are thus called because they tend towards dodging the issue and generally avoid commiting themselves to any exact position (see D. I pp. 37-41). The first kind of "Eel-Wriggler", for example, does so out of the fear that the position he adopts might simply be an erroneous one; the second, out of the fear that adopting a position gives rise to a grasping or clinging condition (upādāna)[2]; the third, out of the fear of not being able to explain (and perhaps defend) his adopted position in the face of antagonistic logicians (viz., the hair splitter or vālavedhin); the last, simply out of his dullness (manda) and supidity (momūha). All[3] of them are possessed of these specific fears because their actualization eventually leads to a "pain of remorse" (vighāta) and "hindrance" (antarāya), in other words general soteriological detriment.

Now, this "Eel-Wriggling" manifests itself directly in

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1 These are all summarily enumerated at D. I. pp. 53-55.

2 "Eel-Wriggling" developing in this fashion, would certainly be the type of "Eel-Wriggling" to most likely arise and find a subsequent foothold within Buddhism itself, in the event that a disciple was not sufficiently cautious.

3 Though the mention of vighāta and antarāya does not occur following the fourth type, its implication is quite evident because of the obvious symmetry of the other three explanations.

in the linguistic and logical form of what is called "equivocation" (vācāvikkhepa), which amounts to a general confusion of speech. An example of such "equivocation" is appended to the explanation of the fourth and final type of "Eel-Wriggler", running as follows:

> "If you ask me whether there is another world,— well, if I thought there were, I would say so. But I don't say so. And I don't think it is thus or thus. And I don't think it is otherwise. And I don't deny it. And I don't say there neither is, nor is not, another world." Thus does he equivocate.... (D. I p. 39)

One can see that, in fact, this "Eel-Wriggling" seems to simultaneously assert, and yet non-commitantly, all four of the forms characteristic of avyākatāni. It is not surprising therefore, that this "Eel-Wriggler" manages to perform his "equivocation" on views or propositions as they are structured in the characteristic four-fold assertion-denial-conjunction-disjunction sense of the standard avyākatāni, and that a small list of these positions should be furnished as an example (see D. I pp. 39-40)[1].

Thus in this way, we do not have here the avyākatāni proper, that is as they occur in the Cūlamāluṅkyasutta as ten specific propositions directed at the Buddha and commanding a response from him. Instead, the four-fold structured positions presented in our account of the "Eel-Wrigglers" are intended to exhibit the possibility of views or positions about which one can equivocate, in doing so these four-fold positions can also be taken as standing for the possible instants through which equivocation moves in its attempts

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1 Such lists, with seemingly the same intentions recur further on in the Brahmajālasutta at D. I pp. 44-45, specifically concerning theories pertaining to the soul (atta).

to dodge the issue.

Placed within this context of views (diṭṭhiyo) as they are, the avyākatāni clearly belong to the realm of papañca[1]. However, the key point that must be noticed is that the avyākatāni not only belong to papañca, but that they genuinely typify the very form or structure of papañca. By this I mean to say that the four-fold construction of the avyākatāni represents the totality of possibilities of expressing views concerning any topic, and this in effect amounts to standing for the total possibility, in terms of views (diṭṭhiyo), of papañca. Further, the total possibility of papañca, taken in this way, is essentially the limit of papañca, which in turn, is no more than saying that this four-fold construction is the actual shape or necessary form of papañca, i.e., the logic of papañca.

Yet, the crux of this whole matter and the thing which eventually gives voice to the Buddha's reaction to this whole logic of papañca, is the very simple fact that the limits to anything cannot be drawn from the inside alone. R. C. Pandeya[2] provides us with a few words that might better illustrate this point:

> The question as to what is the cause of the relativistic tendency of the mind itself cannot be answered because that involves a state beyond the relativity field, and our mind cannot venture in that realm.

Therefore one who takes it upon himself to illustrate the limits of

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1 For the relationship between diṭṭhi and papañca see above, pp. 107-109.

2 R. C. Pandeya, "The Mādhyamika Philosophy: A New Approach", PEW. #14, 1964, pp. 3-24. The quotation is on p. 11.

papañca must be aware of that which lies beyond *papañca*, and though Prof. Pandeya makes this statement within the context of Mādhyamika, I think it more than suits our specific concern, as we can gauge by the Buddha's own consistent response to the *papañca* exhibited by the sixty-two views, throughout the *sutta*[1] when he states:

> ...brethren, the Tathāgata knows that these speculations thus arrived at, thus insisted on, will have such and such a result, such and such an effect on the future condition of those who trust in them. That does he know, and he knows also other things far beyond (far better than those speculations); and having that knowledge he is not puffed up, and thus untarnished he has, in his own heart, realised the way of escape from them, has understood, as they really are, the rising up and passing away of sensations, their sweet taste, their danger, how they cannot be relied on, and not grasping after any (of those things men are eager for) he, the Tathāgata, is quite set free.
> 'These, brethren, are those other things, profound, difficult to realise, hard to understand, tranquillising, sweet, not to be grasped by mere logic, subtle, comprehensible only by the wise, which the Tathāgata, having himself realised and seen face to face, hath set forth....

Two key points are brought out in this statement: a) that Buddha does have knowledge of that which is other than *papañca*, this knowledge being itself *nippapañca* in nature[2]; b) that these things which are known in this way by the Buddha are "not to be grasped by mere logic" (*atakkāvacarā*)[3] or, in other words, not within the realm of logic and thus incapable of giving rise to views (*diṭṭhiyo*). The

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1 This statement appears after each set of views enumerated in the second and third chapters of the Brahmajālasutta. However its most emphatic occurence seems to be just after the "Eel-Wrigglers".

2 In the sense of the phrase, "...having that knowledge he is not puffed up...." (*tañ ca pajānanaṃ, na parāmasati....*).

3 See George Grimm's "The Reach in the Doctrine of the Buddha or Atakkavācara, the Idea of Not-Within-The-Realm-Of-Logical-Thought", *Indian Culture*, Vol. III, #3, 1937, pp. 489-495.

first of course allows the Buddha to draw the four-fold limit to papañca and the second reiterates the force of this limit, as it prevents conceptualization and views from reaching the knowledge of these other things[1]. To sum up, the avyākatāni as they appear in the Brahmajālasutta, represent the form and limit of papañca with expected emphasis on their inability to penetrate through to the final state of things.

If we now move on to the Cūlamāluṅkyasutta, we will find that here we encounter the standard set of ten avyākatāni as referring specifically to: "Those (speculative views) that are not explained, set aside and ignored by the Lord...."[2]. We can also recognize that, in comparison with the Brahmajālasutta, the focus shifts from the structure of the avyākatāni as the actual mould of papañca, over to the response that these questions evoke from the Buddha. The exact situation is that bhikkhu named Māluṅkyāputta, while meditating, suddenly becomes dissatisfied with the fact that these specific issues are left unexplained by the Buddha——so much so, that he approaches the Buddha and threatens to revert to secular life if these specific questions are not explained to him[3]. After mildly rebuking Māluṅkyāputta, the Buddha unfolds the well known analogy

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1 This is perhaps some evidence for assuming that a theory of two levels of truth did, in fact, exist in the Nikāyas.

2 MLS. II p. 97. The Pali reads: Yān' imāni diṭṭhigatāni Bhagavatā abyākatāni ṭhapitāni paṭikkhittāni.... Such a specification is perhaps evidence that this sutta belongs to a later strata of the Nikāyas than the Brahmajāla-, but this is not a pressing concern for us.

3 By implication, Māluṅkyāputta would probably settle for any sort of commitment by the Buddha to these views, or even his ignorance in respect to them if that was indeed the case.

concerning the man wounded by an arrow (see MLS. II p. 99), but still never directly answers Māluṅkyāputta, and remains silent on the topic of the avyākatāni.

Quite obviously the problem that Māluṅkyāputta faces in confronting this silence of the Buddha does not reside in the silence itself, but in the Buddha's actual reason for so remaining silent. Modern scholarship is far from unanimous in the determination of this reason, and T. W. Organ[1] gives us an excellent overview of this situation with his submission of six possible alternatives for interpreting this reason:

1) He (the Buddha) accepted the current views.
2) He rejected the current views.
3) He had no views of his own (agnosticism).
4) He would not tell his own views (out of the inadequate capacity of man to properly understand them).
5) He could not tell his own views (because of the inadequacy of language).
6) He would not be distracted from his main purpose (pragmatism).

Proferssor Organ's elaboration of each of these possibilities is interesting, but in the light of the Brahmajālasutta the first must be rejected outright, for that whole sutta is a negative comment on all views current to Northern India at the time of the Buddha. The second, for this exact reason, seems to be acceptable, yet it is so only with qualification, that is to say, only in the more important sense that the Buddha's rejection of views does not result simply because of their specific content (i.e., what they may actually as-

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1 T. W. Organ, "The Silence of the Buddha", pp. 128 ff..

sert), but out of the fact that they are, in themselves, views (diṭṭhiyo), i.e., papañca.

The third or agnostic possibility, which is at times indicated in the writings of A. B. Keith[1] and T. W. Rhys Davids[2], also has to be rejected in the light of those statements in the Brahmajalasutta which indicate that the Buddha is, in fact, aware of things both more subtle and beyond papañca (see above p. 120). The fourth and the fifth possibilities are closely connected, since man's understanding is consistently a function of language, or in other words, conceptual and thus belonging to papañca. N. Tatia[3] and G. M. Nagao[4] seem to hold to the former of these two views, and S. Radhakrishnan[5] to the latter. These last two possibilities for the Buddha's silence, namely, those resulting respectively from the the limited capacity of man to understand the nature of what the Buddha might have had to say and the inability of language which is the medium of that understanding to give adequate expression of the same, also seem to cause the Buddha to adopt a temporary, yet analo-

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1 See T. W. Organ, " The Silence of the Buddha", pp. 132-133.

2 See N. Tatia, "The Avyākrtas...", p. 158.

3 N. Tatia, "The Avyākrtas..." P. 158: "In our judgment the Buddha was a rationalist who was however fully conscious of the limitations of the human reason.".

4 G. M. Nagao, "The Silence...", pp. 141: "When one responds to such questions and abides on the same level with the questioner, he inevitably falls into the difficulty of antinomy, and this does not lead to the true knowledge which was the goal of the Buddha.".

5 S. Radhakrishnan, "The Teaching...", p. 350: "To me the silence is not a proof either of denial or of agnosticism. It is an expression of the conviction that there are certain truths which cannot be expressed....".

gous, silence immediately after his attainment of elightenment[1]. However, in this latter case the Buddha is eventually persuaded to speak, but this does not in any way mean that what he had to speak about in this instance, was any less difficult for man to understand than the answer to the avyākatāni which the Buddha does not give. In fact, the phrase which describes the knowledge of the Dhamma gained by the Enlightenment (translated by Horner at MLS. I. p. 211: "...deep, difficult to see....") is identical in the Pali with the phrase descibing the Buddha's knowledge of things other than those which characterize the views of men (translated by Rhys Davids at D. I. p. 40: "...profound, difficult to realise...."; also see above p. 120)[2], especially the views of the Eel-Wrigglers which are marked by their avyākata-type of four-fold logical oscillation. Since the Buddha did speak in the one case when presented with these two problems, they alone cannot be enough to keep him silent in respect to the avyākatāni.

The final or pragmatic possibility is of course the single most plausible reason of the six, and it is the one that T. W. Organ[3] himself leans towards. This is further borne out by the fact that this is precisley the manner in which the Buddha accounts for his silence to Māluṅkyāputta (MLS. II. p. 101):

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1 For example see MLS. I. pp. 211-213.

2 For a discussion of this phrase and its occurence in the Nikāyas with a special emphasis on the concept of atakkāvacara, see G. Grimm, "The Reach in the Doctrine...".

3 T. W. Organ, "The Silence of the Buddha", p. 139: "If one must choose only one of the six hypotheses as the reason Gautama the Buddha avoided speculative questions, the pragmatic hypothesis seems to me the best explanation.".

> ...why, Māluṅkyāputta, has this not been explained by me? It is because it is not connected with the goal, is not fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and does not conduce to turning away from, nor to dispassion, stopping, calming, super-knowledge, awakening nor to nibbāna. Therefore it has not been explained by me, Māluṅkyāputta.[1]

Thus, we see that the Buddha remains silent on the point of the avyākatāni, because to do the opposite would give rise to speculations that could only serve to deter those who aspired to Nibbāna from reaching their goal. What this silent response of the Buddha, concerning the avyākatāni, may be said to contribute to the Early Buddhist understanding of language, is that language, as the fourfold limit to conceptualization indicated by the avyākatāni[2], is essentially detrimental to the pursuit and attainment of Nibbāna.

In concluding this chapter we may say that the Early Buddhist concept of language, as exemplified by the notion of papañca and the Buddha's silent response to the avyākatāni, is predominantly a negative one. By the word "negative" we mean to say that papañca and the avyākatāni (which can be reduced to papañca) hinder and take away from the acquiring of that which is sought after in Early Buddhism, namely, Nibbāna. The silence of the Buddha in respect to the avyākatāni is merely a comment on this fact. Along with this, or perhaps, because of this, we will also notice that what might be called the 'essence'[3] of the Early Buddhist con-

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1 This reason is repeated to Vacchagotta under the similar circumstances in the Aggivacchagottasutta at MLS. II. p. 164.

2 As they appear in the Brahmajālasutta, see above p. 119.

3 By using this term I do not so much wish to make ontological implications as to indicate its nature as a function of that from which it draws its power to impede the attainment of Nibbāna.

cept of language belongs to that given expansion (papañca) which is different from the Absolute State (Nibbāna); accordingly, the little theory concerning the notion of language that is developed in Early Buddhism arises in this context, and not out of an extended analysis of the actual and declared words of the Buddha[1]. In fact the speech of the Buddha is nippapañca (free from papañca), and not really language (in the sense that the Early Buddhist idea of language has all along been described in this chapter) at all, but the pure Truth (Dhamma)[2] of Buddhism.

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1 Namely the buddhadhamma or better, buddhavacana (see above, p. 113 n.2.

2 That is to say, the Dhamma as the Way, is the expression of the very essence of Buddhism, or in other words, the very essence of what the Buddha spoke about. In this respect it must be pointed out the final and most important aim of the Dhamma is not to make a pronouncement, in an ontological sense, concerning the actual state of things given, or as a corollary, to attempt to intentionally define the Absolute (i.e., Nibbāna). Instead the supreme aim of the Dhamma is to show the way or path out of the impermanence (anicca) and suffering (dukkha) of the everyday world. J. W. de Jong stresses this fact in his "The Absolute in Buddhist Thought", Essays in Philosophy (Presented to Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan on his 50th. Birthday) ed., C. T. K. Chari and others, Ganesh and Co., Madras, 1962, pp. 56-64, for after supplying a brief list of similies that relate to Nibanna and occur in the Pali canon (this he does on p. 57), he states the following:

> ...not one of these words contains a description or definition of Nirvana. They only point to the other shore (pāra, Samy. Nik. IV, 369). If we subject these terms to a careful examination, we see that they convey either an antithesis to the conditions of saṁsāra or a negation of these.

Thus even the positive description of Nibānna as "supreme bliss" (paramaṁ sukham, MN. I p. 508) is not meant to define Nibānna, but simply to indicate its complete otherness and difference from given existence. This is further atested to by the arrangement of the Four Noble Truths, since they culminate in the assertion of the Noble Eight-fold Path and not the more ontologically oriented nirodha.

Thus, from our brief study of the notion of language in Early Buddhism[1], and especially in terms of *papañca* and the *avyākatāni*, we can venture the general conclusion that a) language as conceptual proliferation does not properly belong to the sphere of that which is to be sought after (*i.e.*, Nibānna) and b) that on top of this, language as conceptual proliferation works, at every turn, against the attainment of that which is to be sought after (by giving rise to *klesāni etc.*)[2]. In the light of these conclusions, and the whole of the chapter in general, the predicate "diabolical" seems more than appropriate in capturing the nature of language as it was conceived of at this very early stage of Buddhism.

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1 Though I have restricted myself almost totally to the first four Āgamas in this chapter, a text that appears to belong to the oldest strata of the canon, namely, the *Atthakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta* also seems to bear significantly on this topic of the Early Buddhist notion of language. A recent paper by Luis O. Gomez, *i.e.*, "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon", *PEW*. 26, #2, Apr. 1976, pp. 137-165, centres its discussion around this very important text. Further work on this topic would, of course, have to begin with an in-depth study of this text.

2 The problem as to whether the words of the Buddha, *i.e.*, the Dhamma, can be considered to be language in these two senses or not, is a difficult one. It does not seem to be touched upon at all by the Early Buddhists other than in the remarks that the Buddha's speech is *nippapañca* and therefore not really language in the above two senses (also see previous page). However, there are instances in the canon, such as the well known parable of the raft (*MLS*. I pp. 112 f.) which seem to imply that even the Dhamma can give rise to *papañca*. It seems that the only way of reconciling this apparent contradiction is to look at it as a precursor of the famous Mādhyamika doctrine of two truths (*MMK*. 24. 8), so that in the eyes of the enlightened and in terms of the Buddha himself he did not speak a single word between the night of his Enlightenment and the night of his *parinirvāṇa* (see *Prasannapadā*, Poussin's edition, p. 366), while in order to be taught the Dhamma has to rely on its mundane actuality and form (*vyavahāramanāśritya paramārtho na deśyate*, *MMK*. 24. 10) with the accompanying danger that it too becomes conducive to *papañca*.

Nāgārjuna and Language

Here our question is once again (see p. 38) of the following double nature: "To what is Nāgārjuna responding in undertaking his whole philosophical enterprise?", and "How may his concern with language be seen to fit into this response?".

In preparing to answer this, we must keep in mind the points concerning the characteristic soteriological aspects of Indian philosophizing made at the onset of the second chapter. This of course becomes acutely important in terms of Nāgārjuna's philosophy as it stands in MMK. and especially in VV., for here, at the very core of Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika, we have what appears on the surface to be simply an exercise in abstract thought and purely critical dialectic. In the main part, we may attribute this to the nature and intention of the two works as śāstra and polemic respectively[1], but this does not divorce them from the fact that

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1 For the three classes of Buddhist śāstra see Bu-ston, History of Buddhism (Chos-hbyung), trans., E. Obermeiller, Tokyo, 1964, p. 43. Though VV. is not a śāstra, it is classed on p. 51 of the same work as a text for "...refuting the challenges of antagonists...". It is important to recognize at this point, that the great bulk of modern scholarship on Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, revolves around the śāstrāni and related philosphical works in themselves, without any effort being made to connect them to the broader base of sūtra literature along with its meditational and monastic implications. For a discussion of this last problem see, Jan Yün-hua, "Dimensions of Indian Buddhism", Pattra (Singapore) Vol. 8, 1975, pp. A8-A21.

they are essentially Buddhist works. What I mean to say, is that perhaps the most important and unifying statement that one can make about Buddhism, in all of its phases and manifestations, is that it is above all a teaching of a path rather than a systematic metaphysics in abstract pursuit of an Ultimate Reality[1].

Therefore, though Nāgārjuna is attempting to press the doctrine of śūnyatā (emptiness) to its logical consequences and limits, often to the apparent detriment of soteriological possibilities[2] and even the validity of the Four Noble Truths (catvāryārya-satyāni)[3], one must not conlude that he is doing so to further a set of logical or sceptical aims, rather his aim is masterfully ironic in demonstrating the final insubstantiality and relativity of any

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1 Such is of course epitomized in the Four Noble Truths which culminate not in nirodha, i.e., a statement about things (or reality), but in mārga, a statement about the Way (or becoming).

2 For example in his "Karmakāraka-Parīksā" ("Testing [of the Notions] of Actor and Action", MMK. VIII) Nāgārjuna establishes the fact that neither the actor as producer of action, nor the action as that which is produced by the actor hame any reality, and in doing so, he makes the following comment (v. 6):

> 6. phale 'sati na moksāya na svargāyopapadyate/
> mārgah sarvakriyānām ca nairarthakyam prasajyate//
> (In the case of the absense of the fruit [of action], a path arises neither for the sake of moksa or for the sake of heaven, and the purposelessness of all things which are to be done results.)

3 See MMK. XXIV ("Āryasatya-Parīksā"), however, Nāgārjuna takes great pains to bracket his whole discussion of this topic within the proper understanding of śūnyatā, i.e., in the light of the two-fold doctrine of truth (dve satye), namely verses 8 f.. To put this in further perspective, one might also check Nagarjuna's own commentary to his VV. 70: "yasya hi śūnyatā prabhavati tasya pratītyasamutpadah prabhavati... tasya catvāryāryasatyāni prabhavanti... tasya śrāmanyaphalāni prabhavanti, sarvaviśesādhigamāh prabhavanti.".

abstract pursuit of the Absolute whatever. What better evidence is there for making the assumption that there must be, what might be called, a broader religious base underlying all of Nāgārjuna's dialectical speculation, than the manner in which he opens and closes his MMK., that is, by paying homage to the Buddha[1]. My point, therefore, is that in Nāgārjuna, the philosophical enterprise is never divorced from the process of becoming (mārga) which is the foundation of Buddhism. This I hope will set the general tone for the rest of our investigation of Nāgārjuna's thought in this chapter.

Before entering directly into the main body of our discussion, a few brief historical remarks seem in order. Nāgārjuna is the founder of the Mādhyamika[2] school of Buddhism and thus the first Mahāyāna theoretician, flourishing in the late second or early

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1 Before beginning the MMK. proper, Nagarjuna supplies a list of the famous eight-negations and the following verse:

> yah pratītyasamutpādaṁ prapañcopaśamam śivaṁ/
> deśayāmāsa saṁbuddhastaṁ vande vadatāṁ varaṁ//
> (I pay homage to the Fully Awakened One, the supreme teacher who has taught pratītyasamutpāda and the blissful cessation of prapañca.).

The final verse of MMK., i.e., XXVII. 30, is similar:

> sarvadrstiprahāṇāya yah saddharmamadeśayat/
> anukapāmupādāya taṁ namasyāmi gautamaṁ//

as is the closing couplet of Nāgārjuna's commentary on VV. 70:

> yah śūnyatāṁ pratītyasamutpādaṁ madhyamāṁ pratipadaṁ ca/
> ekārthāṁ nijagāda praṇamāmi tamapratimabuddhaṁ//

2 Literally, that which relates to the middlemost (position), and is to be taken in the sense of a school which avoids metaphysical and epistemological extremes in its philosophical outlook. See Richard A Gard, An Introduction to the Study of Mādhyamika Buddhism, (PHD. Dissertation), Claremont Graduate School, 1951, for a bibliographic survey of the six (Indian, Tibetan, Central Asian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese) regional developments of this school.

third century AD.[1]. Traditionally, Nāgārjuna has been closely associated, conceptually, historically and mythologically with prajñā-pāramitā literature (sūtras) and most modern scholarship is of this same opinion[2]. A. K. Warder[3] however, is of the opinion that such an association takes far too much for granted and he even plausibly submits the thesis that Nāgārjuna was not a Mahāyānist, mainly out of the fact that all of Nāgārjuna's allusions in MMK. are to Pāli suttas[4]. Though we are not directly concerned with this problem in

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1 See Max Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chinese Sources", trans., A. A. Probsthain, Hirth Anniversary Volume (Asia Major, Introductory Volume), 1923, pp. 421-455, and Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More? A New Interpretation of Buddhist Hagiography", HOR. Vol. X, #2, Nov. 1970, pp. 139-155. In the latter paper, which is a continuation in effect, of the former, the author concudes that only one Nāgārjuna (the author of MMK.) really existed and that he became many Nāgārjunas (such as the Tantric or Alchemist Nāgārjuna) through the passage of time and the aid of Buddhist hagiographers.

2 For example, see Richard H. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika..., pp. 61-65; K. Venkata Ramanan, Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as Presented in the Mahā-Prajñāpāramitā-Śāstra, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1975, p. 43; Robert F. Olson, Aspects of the Middle Way: A Study of the Mādhyamika Kārikās of Nāgārjuna in the Light of Perfection of Wisdom, (PHD. Dissertation), Columbia University, 1967; Richard A. Gard, Introduction..., pp. 306-307.

3 A. K. Warder, "Is Nāgārjuna a Mahāyānist?", TT., pp. 78-88. Also see the same author's Indian Buddhism, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1970, pp. 376-377. In this same respect we find that terms such as prajñā (insight), pāramitā (perfection) and karunā (compassion), which abound in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, are conspicuously absent in MMK. and VV. (see Richard H. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika..., p. 63 for a fuller list of terms which occur in the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-sūtra frequently but are missing from MMK.).

4 Apart from this, certain authors have propounded strong conceptual affinities between Nāgārjuna and portions of the Pāli canon. See, N. Dutt, "The Brahmajāla Sutta, in the Light of Nāgārjuna's Expositions", IHQ. Vol. VIII, 1932, pp. 706-746, and Luis O. Gomez, "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon", PEW. Vol. 26, #2, Apr. 1976, pp. 137-165.

our investigation, I think it is safe to say that Nāgārjuna was of the firm conviction that he was only illucidating the original and fundamental truth of the Buddha, in this respect his affiliation, or not, with the prajñāpāramitā sūtras is incidental. However, one cannot, on the other hand, overlook the fact that Buddhist tradition looks upon Nāgārjuna as the founder of scholastic Mahāyāna, as well as, in a more mythical sense, the person who brought the Śatasahasrikaprajñāpāramitāsūtra from the Nāga-world to the world of man[1], thus making him a Mahāyānist if only by default.

These things considered, our discussion of Nāgārjuna's thought will proceed along two major lines. First of all alohg the lines of what might be called a discussion of Nāgārjuna's metaphysic[2], under the heading of: "Saṃvṛti and Paramārtha". Secondly, along the lines of an investigation of Nāgārjuna's critque of metaphysical viewpoints, under the heading of: "Dialectic and Pseudo-Polemic". In both of these segments we will attempt to concentrate upon certain topics and concepts, such as prapañca, prajñāpti, śūnyatā, catuṣkoṭi, etc., which can be said to have a direct bearing upon the ontological status and role of language within Nāgārjuna's system.

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1 See Bu-ston, History...., p. .

2 Whether this term suits Nāgārjuna's systematic philosophy is questionable since Nāgārjuna himself does not claim to have any position of his own (nāsti ca mama pratijñā, VV. 29) and śūnyavāda itself avoids any any implication whatsoever of a positive ontology. By using this term I merely wish to indicate that for Nāgārjuna śūnyatā serves, albeit in a dialectical manner, as both the ground and goal of becoming, and this is something akin to a metaphysical finality.

i) Saṃvṛti and Paramārtha

If one compares the overall tone of MMK. and VV. with that of the Pāli Nikāyas, one will notice that in the latter we find no overbearing concern to precisely describe and establish an Ultimate Reality (Nibbāna, see note 2, p. 126 above). What the Nikāyas do endeavour to show, is the nature of given reality as dukkha (Skt. duḥkha, suffering) and the way (magga, Skt. mārga) out of this suffering, and in this way their teaching can be justifiably described as supremely pragmatic rather than speculative. Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, is concerned with presenting a systematic and argued explanation of the final implications of the third Noble Truth namely, nirodha or extinction (of suffering)[1] and in doing so, he employs a concept that is the conerstone of prajñāpāramitā thought: śūnyatā (emptiness).

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1 Though, as we have said before (above p. 130), he does not in any way abandon the fundamental Buddhist soteriology of mārga. In the sense that Nāgārjuna brings to the forefront, in these two works, the analytic tone of a penetration into the real state of things, he works within the same context of the Abhidharma schools and Naiyāyika theorists of his day, and thus makes his attacks upon them that much more effective. One might also notice that the prajñāpāramitā sūtras begin to devote a more prominant portion of their textual body to the symbolism of the final state of things (i.e., dharmatā = śūnyatā = tathatā = prajñāpāramitā, etc.) than do the Pāli suttas, and in fact, some scholars do actually refer to an ontology (if one can have an ontology without being) of the prajñāpāramitā literature (see, for example: Edward Conze, "The Ontology of the Prajñāpāramitā", PEW. Vol. III #2, July 1953, pp. 117-129; Donald W. Mitchell, "The Paradox of Buddhist Wisdom", PEW. Vol. XXVI #1, Jan. 1976, pp. 55-66, especially p. 58). This type of Absolutism, which attempts to encompass the true state of things seems dominant in Nāgārjuna, though one cannot properly call it an ontology, as we might, for example encounter it in Śaṅkara Advaita.

In MMK. and VV., Nāgārjuna seems to presuppose what might be termed a basic prajñāpāramitā understanding of the term śūnyatā[1] as an anti-ontological and anti-sarvāstivādin[2] absence of intrinsic own-reality (svabhāva), though he nowhere makes any explicit allusion to the more positive symbolism of śūnyatā as tathatā, prajñā, etc., which, though rarely, does occur in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras[3]. The closest that Nāgārjuna comes to actually defining the term "śūnyatā"[4] appears to be in two complementary passages, namely, MMK.

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1 A sample of such an understanding in the prajñāpāramitā litera- can be found in Edward Conze trans., The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom, Pt. I, Luzac & Vo., 1961, pp. 129-132, wherein twenty kinds or examples of śūnyatā are presented. T. R. V. Murti, includes a short but informative exegetical discussion of this very passage and the twenty modes of śūnyatā as an "Appendix" to his Central Philosophy..., pp. 350-356. The term itself is not absent from the Pāli canon, and even has two separate suttas devoted to it in MLS., viz., Cūḷasuññatasutta and Mahāsuññatasutta (MLS. III, pp. 147-162), however, its meaning there is obscure and far more general than in the prajñāpāramitā usage.

2 It is a well known fact that MMK. and the statements concerning śūnyatā made therein are especially directed against the Sarvāstivādins and their radical pluralism of independantly real (svabhāva) dharmas. For an analysis of the Sarvāstivādin metaphysic see Th. Stcherbatsky, The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma", Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1974. See also, J. W. de Jong, "The Problem of the Absolute in the Madhyamaka School", JIP. 1, 1972, pp. 1-6, for a summation of Schayer's four-fold interpretation of svabhāva (pp. 2-3).

3 See Edward Conze, "The Ontology...", p. 126 and T. R. V. Murti, Central Philosophy..., p. 86.

4 The term śūnyatā is used fourteen times in MMK. and far more frequently in VV. where the term śūnyatva also occurs (e.g., v. 21). Of the occurences in MMK. five are connected with the improper postulations of opponents (XII. 3; XXIV. 6-7; 11; 13), it is used twice to describe the Buddha's teaching (XIII. 2; XVII. 20), twice as an incidental basis of inferences (IV. 8; XXVII. 29), leaving perhaps five (XIII. 8; XVIII. 5; XXIV. 14; 18) as significant in themselves. For a broad study of the concept see F. J. Streng's Emptiness, New York, Abingdon Press, 1967, which should be read in the light of J. W. de Jong's review: "Emptiness", JIP. 2, pp. 7-15.

XXIV. 18 and VV. 22.

In the first of these Nāgārjuna states the following:

> yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṁ tāṁ pracakṣmahe/
> sā prajñaptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā//
> (We regard that as śūnyatā, which is pratītyasamutpāda/ It [śūnyatā] is [used as] an upādāya prajñapti [metaphorical instruction], it is simply madhyamā pratipad [the middle path]//).

This verse in its entirety, stands as perhaps the most crucial and germinal single comment made by Nāgārjuna concerning the concept of language, however, at this point we may restrict ourselves to his equation of śūnyatā with pratītyasamutpāda (dependent origination)[1] in the first line. What we encounter in this equation is the logical realisation that if one does accept this theory of relational or relative causality, which is fundamental to Buddhism, one must also accept the fact that no essential reality or dharma that is possessed of an independent existence (svabhāva) could ever occur.

VV. 22 merely corroborates what has been said above in the following manner:

> yaśca pratītyabhāvo bhāvānāṁ śūnyateti sā proktā/
> yaśca pratītyabhāvo bhavati hi tasyāsvabhāvatvam//
> (That which is the dependent [or relative] nature of things is called śūnyatā/ For, that which is the dependent nature [of things] is without independent existence [asvabhāvatva]//).

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1 See above p. 99 n. 1. Two Chapters in MMK. are directly related to pratītyasamutpāda, i.e., "Pratyaya Parīkṣā" (Chpt. I) and "Dvādaśāṅga Parīkṣā" (Chpt. XXVI). Candrakīrti supplies this etymology at Pr. 2.16: pratītyaśabdo 'tra lyabantaḥ prāptāvapekṣāyāṁ vartate. samutpūrvaḥ padiḥ prādurbhāvārtha iti samutpādaśabdaḥ prādurbhāve vartate. tataśca hetupratyayāpekṣo bhāvānāmutpādaḥ pratītyasamutpādārthaḥ. As the final phrase indicates it essentially involves the manifestation of things as dependent or relative to their causes or conditions.

Thus śūnyatā for Nāgārjuna is above all the svabhāvaśūnyatā of all dharmas[1], and this is in every way opposed to ontology as the science in pursuit of that which has real being. However, this does not prevent Nāgārjuna from making what paradoxically[2] appears to have the form or structure of an ontological presupposition in his implicit assumption that śūnyatā serves as both the ground and the goal of given existence (e.g., MMK. XXII. 16: tathāgato niḥsvabhāvo niḥsvabhāvamidaṁ jagat//)[3]. In this way, śūnyatā is the pivotal point of Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika philosophy.

Having, in this way, set up śūnyatā as the pre-eminent principle of Nāgārjuna's thought, our ensuing problem becomes the establishment of the nature and role of language[4] in respect to this absence of svabhāva in all things. First of all, the most comprehensive single term that Nāgārjuna employs to encompass what

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1 Nāgārjuna's commentary to this verse (VV. 22) amplifies this by providing the reason why things are empty: hetupratyayasāpekṣatvāt. yadi hi svabhāvato bhāvā bhaveyuḥ, pratyākhyāyāpi hetupratyayaṁ ca bhaveyuḥ. na caivaṁ bhavanti. tasmānniḥsvabhāva niḥsvabhāvatvācchūnyā ityabhidhīyante. ([They are so] because of a dependence on cause and condition. For if things were on account of [their] own reality, they would exist even when having set aside the cause and condition. [However] they are not so. Therefore, they are devoid of own reality, [and] on account of this devoidness they are called empty [śūnya].).

2 The symbolic or verbal paradox of the prajñāpāramitā literature (see, Donald W. Mithchell, "The Paradox...") has become the logical paradox, or the paradox in thought, of the Madhyamika. R. F. Olson takes note of this in the Conclusion of his Doctoral Dissertation Aspects of the Middle Way....

3 Śūnyatā as the ground may perhaps be derived from the Early Buddhist doctrine of anattā (no-self), and śūnyatā as the goal from the Early Buddhist doctrine of nirodha (cessation).

4 Again, "language" is used here in the broadest possible sense of the word.

might be called language, in the broad sense of the word, is prapañca (the expanse of psycho-linguistic proliferation)[1].

The term occurs only six times in MMK.[2] and is absent from VV.[3], yet in these few instances it clearly emerges as that which is antithetical to the goal of Buddhism, in other words, prapañca is the essence and form of everything that stands in opposition to the finality of śūnyatā. In this way we find tattva (reality = śūnyatā) described as: aparapratyayaṁ śāntaṁ prapañcairaprapañcitam (not conditioned by another, quiescent, not having been extended by prapañca - MMK. XVIII. 9). What seems to be meant by the predicate prapañcairaprapañcitam[4] is that tattva/śūnyatā never becomes involved in, and is totally different from, the natural tendency on the part of man to render the things that he encounters and the things that are placed before him, as understood, by means of conceptually appropriating them, and thus giving rise to an extension (prapañca) of notions and words which, in turn, becomes the essential matrix of his reality. This association of prapañca with the rampant conceptualization and resulting impurities of given existence (saṁsāra), as well as its necessary absence in śūnyatā, are both commented upon in an earlier verse from the same Chapter,

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1 See the previous Chapter for the use of this term in the Pāli Nikāyas. It does not, I think, vary significantly from Nāgārjuna's employment of it.

2 That is, counting the introductory dedication and MMK. XVIII. 5; 9; XXII. 15; XXV. 24; XI. 6.

3 Neither does it appear to occur in Nāgārjuna's more dubious works, such as NS., PS., MV., except for R.T. 50-51.

4 Candrakīrti explains prapañcairaprapañcitam as vāgbhiravyāhṛtam (not uttered [with perhaps a play on the sense of 'captured' or 'eaten' contained in ā-√hṛ] by words), Pr. 159.8.

namely, MMK. XVIII. 5:

> karmakleśakṣayānmokṣah karmakleśā vikalpatah/
> te prapañcātprapañcastu śūnyatāyām nirudhyate//
> (Mokṣa exists on account of the destruction of the impurities of action, the impurities of action exist on acount of imagining/
> These [impurities] exist on acount of prapañca, but prapañca ceases in śūnyatā//).

In the light of this verse, it is not difficult to understand Nāgārjuna's use of the phrase prapañcopaśamam śivam (blissful calming of prapañca)[1] as a description of what the Buddha taught, (in the dedicatory introduction to MMK.) or the equation of the phrase with the calming of all mental perceptions (sarvopalambhopaśamah prapañcopaśamah śivah/ - MMK. XXV. 24)[2]. We are therfore left with one final verse for consideration, MMK. XXII. 15:

> prapañcyanti ye buddham prapañcatītamavyayam/
> te prapañcahatāh sarve na paśyanti tathāgatam//
> (Those who conceptually reach for the buddha who is unchangeable [and] who has passed beyond prapañca/
> They are all undone by prapañca and do not perceive the tathāgata//).

This verse again indicates the basic nature of prapañca as conceptual extension and that as such, one must recognise within it an inherent limitation that does not allow it to reach beyond itself, without the penalty of self-deception.

Having thus isolated prapañca, and shown that its defining characteristics involve: a) the conceptual 'moving-outwards' into, and appropriation of, given existence; b) the fact that such acti-

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1 Candrakīrti calls this sarvaprapañcopaśama the aim (prayojana) of Nāgārjuna's treatise, at Pr. 4.1.

2 Candrakirti (Pr. 236.7-8): vācāmapravṛtterva prapañcopaśamascittasyāpravṛtteh śivah. Thus, it is blissful because of the cessation of words and thought.

vity is removed from the true state (tattva/śūnyatā) of things, and even ongoingly and spontaneously compounds its own alienation from reality; our present task is to formulate the possible implications of such a notion of prapañca, coupled with the most fundamental Mādhyamika tenet of the emptiness (śūnyatā) of all dharmas, in terms of what might be called a general Mādhyamika theory of language.

The first thing that one notices, of course, is that language as prapañca is a soteriologically negative complex that only deters one from reaching that which is to be attained[1]. This is the case because the whole process of conceptual expansion outwards (prapañca) presupposes the independent reality (svabhāva) of quite a number of things, such as the actuality of the external object being seized by the conceptualization, the actuality of the subject endeavouring to conceptualize, and the actuality of thought as the medium of this conceptualization—which Nāgārjuna can in no way accept. For Nāgārjuna, the only sense in which any thing can be spoken of as being in relation to another[2], is along the lines of an analogy to the Buddhist doctrine of causal dependence (pratītyasamutpāda), and what this means is that the realtion between "word" and "object" in Mādh-

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1 There is no room in Mādhyamika for śabdapramāṇa, though it would, I think, look upon the words and teaching of the Buddha as niṣprapañca and therefore empty. See MMK. XXV. 24: na kvacitkasyacitkaściddharmo buddhena deśitaḥ; and Candrakīrti on this.

2 This intentional slip back into a 'thing-language' anticipates our discussion of the Mādhyamika theory of two truths.

yamika cannot be a static or intrinsic one, but only a relative or conventional one.

Language as such a network of conventional relations, is called saṁvṛti[1] by the Mādhyamika, and for a full explanation of the term we have to look to Candrakīrti, who at Pr. 215.6-8 states the following:

> samantādvaraṇaṁ saṁvṛtiḥ. ajñānaṁ hi samantātsarva-padārthatattvāvacchādanātsaṁvṛtirityucyate. paras-parasaṁbhavanaṁ vā saṁvṛtiranyonyasamāśrayenetyar-thaḥ. athavā saṁvṛtiḥ saṁketo lokavyavahāra ityar-thaḥ. (Saṁvṛti is the concealmeant of the whole universe. Saṁvṛti is thus called ignorance, on account of the fact that it is that which covers over the true nature of all things. Or saṁvṛti has the sense of 'containing one another', because of mutual dependence. Or else, saṁvṛti is convention, the mundane world of conceptual exchange.).

From this, we can isolate three aspects of saṁvṛti which can respectively be indicated by these three words: a) ajñāna (ignorance); b) pratītyasamutpāda (mutual dependence = anyonyasamāśraya in the passage); c) saṁketa (convention). Though the last appears to be the most commonly used sense of the three[2], I think that

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1 This term only occurs once in MMK. at XXIV. 8. and surprisingly is absent from VV., as well as, NS., PS., MV., and R.. However, we do find vyavahāra occuring at MMK. XXIV. 10 and VV. 28 (as sam-). For information on the terms saṁvṛti see, Gadjin M. Nagao, "An Interpretation of the Term 'Saṁvṛti' (Convention) in Buddhism", from Silver Jubilee Volume of the Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo Kyoto University, Kyoto, 1954, ed. Shigeki Kaizuka, pp. 550-561. In this paper G. M. Nagao deals with Pāli, Mādhyamika, Vijñānavādin, and Chinese sources and he does not seem to think that the derivation from √vṛ or √vṛt is very pressing difference (p. 556). See also the pertinent essays dealing with Buddhism in The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta, ed. G. M. C. Sprung, as well as bibliographical footnotes numbers 773 and 777 in Jacques May trans., Candrakīrti: Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti, Paris, 1959.

2 See G. M. Nagao, "An Interpretation...", p. 553.

we must consider the second (pratītyasamutpāda) as the most essential to Mādhyamika notion of language, for it is here that language tangentally comes in contact with the ultimate notion of śūnyatā[1]. Language as saṁketa or ajñāna is a derivative concept in respect to this[2].

However saṁvṛti is not restricted, in Mādhyamika, to this linguistic connotation, for it also has a broader epistemological sense in which it means 'lower truth' (saṁvṛtisatya) as opposed to 'higher truth' (paramārthasatya)[3]. Thus, the often quoted MMK. XXIV. 8:

> dve satye samupāśritya buddhānāṁ dharmadeśanā/
> lokasaṁvṛtisatyaṁ ca satyaṁ ca paramārthataḥ//
> (The dharma-teaching of the Buddhas rests upon two truths/
> The relative truth of the world and truth in the highest sense//).

What we have then, in Nāgārjuna, is this epistemic bifurcation of reality, a bifurcation which seeks to make cognisant the complete difference between given and ultimate reality . Candrakīrti's comments on this (Pr. 215.12f.) must be supplied here:

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1 For the relationship between pratītyasamutpāda and śūnyatā, see above pp. 135-6.

2 Here therefore, I disagree with G. M. Nagao, "An Interpretation...", p. 553, where he proposes that ajñāna perhaps serves as the most fundamental sense of the word saṁvṛti, for the most fundamental notion of saṁvṛti should be that notion which makes or allows the concept to work. In this sense ajñāna does not compare with pratītyasamutpāda as the fundamental notion of saṁvṛti.

3 But then again, one must also notice that the linguistic-conceptual (prapañca) sphere and the epistemic sphere are not at all divided in Mādhyamika. For the connotations of samvṛti- and paramartha- in this epistemic sense see especially G. M. C. Sprung's "The Madhyamika Doctrine of Two Realities as a Metaphysic", TT., pp. 40-53.

> sarva evāyamabhidhānābhidheyajñānajñeyādivyavahāro 'śeṣo lokasaṁvṛtisatyamityucyate. na hi paramārthata ete vyavahārāḥ saṁbhavanti.... sa hi paramārtho'parapratyayaḥ śāntaḥ pratyātmavedya āryāṇāṁ sarvaprapañcātītaḥ. sa nopadiśyate na cāpi jñāyate. (Lokasaṁvṛtisatya is said to be just all this which is without remainder the conceptual exchange involving name and the thing named, knowledge and the thing known, etc.. In the paramārtha sense these things comprising conceptual exchange cannot exist... For paramārtha is not dependent on any other thing, it is quiescence, it is that which is to be personally realised [pratyātmavedya][1] by the wise, it is beyond all prapañca. It cannot be taught or even known.).

We have already encountered such a bifurcation of reality in perhaps a more 'ontological' (in the sense that it reaches for finality as a state rather than an awareness) setting in our discussion of the relationship between prapañca and śūnyatā[2], essentially the statement here is the same, namely, that words, thoughts, symbols, etc.—the essence of transactions and understandings in the lower sphere—cannot touch ultimate reality[3].

Thus, to summarize our first point about a general Mādhyamika theory of language, that is, language as prapañca = lokasaṁvṛtisatya = pratītyasamutpāda, we must say that in these terms

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1 J. May, Candrakīrti..., translates this term as "...intuition personelle..."; see the same author's footnote 783 in the same work.

2 See above, p. 137.

3 Relevant references in this vein are also found in Nāgārjuna's more minor works. For example at MV. 1, that which has been taught by the Buddha is described as vācāvacyam (indescribable in terms of speech). At PS. 1, the Buddha is referred to as: lokopamāmatikrāntaṁ vākpathātītagocaram (having exceeded all worldly comparison, dwelling beyond the path of speech). The reason for this dividing line of indescribability is succinctly accounted for by T. R. V. Murti, Central Philosophy..., p. 235: "If the Paramārtha were not beyond concept and speech, it would cease to be that and would be identical with the empirical.".

language must be seen as a wholly relative complex which is merely able to convey a second-order knowledge, and that only in a conventional manner. What directly follows from this, is the fact of the complete ineffabillity of the Absolute as well as the fact that the degree of subjective immersion in, and reliance on the conceptual sphere is inversely proportional to soteriological advancement (i.e., becoming as it is in relation to śūnyatā).

However, and this will lead into our second point about the Mādhyamika concept of language, does Nāgārjuna, in propounding this theory of two truths[1], advocate the total abandonment of saṁvṛtisatya after the fashion, for example, of a Nihilist[2]? Or to put this in slightly different words, does the doctrine of two truths itself demand a two-fold interpretation? We find Nāgārjuna's statement on this at MMK. XXIV. 10 (cf., VV. 28; S.I. 73):

> vyavahāramanāśritya paramārtho na deśyate/
> paramārthamanāgamya nirvāṇaṁ nādhigamyate//
> (One cannot communicate the highest truth without employing the sphere of conceptual exchange/
> Without having recourse to [the vision of] the highest truth, one cannot attain Nirvāṇa//)

Thus even in terms of the Mādhyamika śūnyatā, one cannot nihilistically assert the unqualified non-existence of given experience, for one must proceed through empirical reality in order to reach

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1 For a well organised account of the intricacies of this Madhyamika theory, see T. R. V. Murti's chapter entiteled "Absolute and Phenomena", in his Central Philosophy..., pp. 228-255.

2 The charge of "nihilism" is commonly inflicted on the whole of Buddhism but especially on Mādhyamika, and I think improperly so. See G. R. Welbon, "On Understanding the Buddhist Nirvana", HOR, V , 1965, pp. 300-325, for the occurrences of this in Buddhist scholarship, especially the Poussin - Stcherbatsky debate.

Nirvāṇa, Candrakīrti, in his commentary to this verse, emphasizes this: tasmānnirvāṇādhigamopāyatvādavaśyameva yathāvasthita saṁvṛtirādāvevābhyupeyā bhājanamiva salilārthineti(Therefore, saṁvṛti such as it is [or in the way it has been presented], is necessarily admitted in the beginning, because of the fact that it is of the nature of the means for the attainment of Nirvāṇa, just as a pot exists because of [or for the sake of] him who desires water.). This produces a very fluid epistemic outlook on reality, which seems to establish its comprehensive nature by a constant dialectical fluctuation between one and the other level. However, one can, I think, accept T. R. V. Murti's following statement as a static or crystalized portrait of the basic structure of this two-fold dynamism: "This is the true Mādhyamika standpoint--acceptance of the empirical reality (saṁvṛti satya) of substance and modes etc., and rejection of them as not ultimate (paramārtha satya)."[1].

If we bring this back into our central concern with the concept of language, we will see that the doctrine of dve satye takes us beyond the complete ineffability of the Absolute, though primarily out of pragmatic considerations, so that pra-

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1 T. R. V. Murti, Central Philosophy..., pp. 250-251. One can, restricting oneself to such a static formulation, viably make many analogical and categorical divisions within the doctrines of Buddhism such as, for example made by Murti in the same work (p. 252): "The four Holy Truths (catvāri āryasatyāni) have to be understood as included in these two: nirodhasatya as Nirvāṇa is paramārtha; and the other three, including mārga, are within saṁvṛti.". However, this itself is a division within saṁvṛti and does not appreciate the dialectical fluidity of śūnyatā which is capable of equating Nirvāṇa with saṁsāra (MMK. XXV. 19).

pañca gains a partial respectability by default. This, in a sense (*i.e.*, a two-fold sense) pragmatically justifies the employment of certain words and names intended to stand for, or in some way describe, the Absolute, such as *śūnyatā*, *tattva*, *tathāgata*, *nirvāṇa*, *etc.*,

It is at this point, I think, that we should return to *MMK.* XXIV. 18, which reads as follows:

> *yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe/*
> *sa prajñaptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā//*
> (We regard that as *śūnyatā*, which is *pratītyasamutpāda*/ It [*śūnyatā*] is [used as] an *upādāya prajñapti* [metaphorical instruction], it is simply *madhyamā pratipad* [the middle path]//)

the first part of which we have already considered above (p. 131). Here our specific concern is the concept of *upādāya prajñapti* (metaphorical instruction)[1].

We can easily see that *śūnyatā* cannot be the name of, or the word that stands for, the Absolute in any objective or definitional type of relation, since the Mādhyamika Absolute is not, in the highest sense, any sort of object or entity possessed of characteristics (*lakṣaṇāni*[2]). In this way, even emptiness is not

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1 More literally 'the instruction where there is depending', following the suggestion of Alex Wayman on p. 145 of his, "Contributions to the Mādhyamika School of Buddhism", *JAOS.*, 89, 1969, pp. 141-152. In this work Wayman provides a translation and explanation of *MMK.* XXIV. 18-19. The phrase *upādāya prajñapti* any where else in *MMK.*, or in Nāgārjuna's other works except for his very dubious *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* (see the index to K. Venkata Ramanan's *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as Presented in the Mahā-Prajñāparamitā-Śāstra*, Delhi, 1975. See also notes 449 and 840 in Jacques May's *Candrakīrti...*. *Prajñapti* by itself occurs at *MMK.* XXII. 11(*Cf.*, XVII. 6; XXII. 8; 10; XXIII. 10-11), *PS.* 2, *R.* I. 47, meaning a provisional or heuristic device,

2 *Cf.*, *MMK.* *Chpt.* V for a treatment of *dhātu* and *lakṣaṇa*.

properly a name of that thing which is sought after by the Madhyamika, but purely a provisional or heuristic convenience designed to calm the inquirer's conceptual extensions, as they are in the process of developing in relation to the Absolute. For example, in a verse such as MMK. XXV. 3:

> aprahīnamasaṁprāptamanucchinnamaśāśvatam/
> aniruddhamanutpannametannirvāṇamucyate//
> (That which is not abandoned, nor attained, nor destroyed, nor eternal/
> That which is not extinguished nor originated, that is called Nirvāṇa//)

each apparent predicate of Nirvāṇa is not intended to define Nirvāṇa, but serves as an upādāya prajñapti by demonstrating, in conjunction with its respective opposite, the provisional applicability of several conceptual polarities[1] as limits to one's theorysing about the Absolute. Such heuristic expressions concerning the Absolute, can never be taken as assertions[2] but only as tangental truths, that touch the Absolute at one point alone—realisation (prajñā)[3].

Thus, in summarizing our second point about a general theory of language as a metaphysical response in Nāgārjuna, we may

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1 This slightly anticipates our subsequent discussion of catuṣkoṭi in the second segment of this chapter.

2 Cf., MMK. XXII. 11. This is paralleled in the dialectic and polemical sphere by the well known fact that the Mādhyamika do not assert a position of their own: nāsti ca mama pratijñā . (VV. 29).

3 The whole notion of upādāya prajñapti presupposes the fact that the one who employs it understands and is speaking from the vantage point of paramārthasatya. In this respect, G. M. Nagao on p. 147 of his "The Silence...", defines upādāya prajñapti as "...'re-established word' after realization of śūnyatā.".

state that though prapañca is a completely negative state of affairs, it is to an extent redeemable in certain instances, but only by one who is established in paramārthasatya, and even then, it is raised only to the status of a provisional validity. An upādāya prajñapti is still prapañca and not paramārtha, however it is prapanca in its most favourable light, that is, the light of paramārthasatya, but this in turn, does not guarantee its infallability as a guidepost for the attainment of that which is to be sought after in Mādhyamika Buddhism[1]. From the standpoint of either saṁvṛtisatya or paramārthasatya, an upādāya prajñapti is a type of prapañca that is paradoxically intended to stop prapañca. As Louis de la Vallée Poussin[2] summarizes it:

> L'enseignement de la vacuité (ou vrai caractère du Pratītyasamutpāda) a pour but d'arrêter toute parole mentale ou vocale (prapañca). Quand le discours (qui se nourrit des notions d'existence, etc.) est arrêté, l'acces est ouvert au paramārtha.

An upādāya prajñapti is simultaneously prapañca and anti-prapañca.

One very important point should, I think, be emphasized here, before parting with this discussion of the second characteristic of language in Nāgārjuna. In the context of Nāgārjuna, an upādāya prajñapti is always a heuristic and linguistic device employed by one who is speaking from the standpoint of paramārthasatya in order to communicate, as best he can, the absolute state of things (dharmas). It is used to justify such a person's occa-

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1 vināśayati durdṛṣṭā śūnyatā mandamedhasam/ (MMK. XXIV. 11).

2 From p. 39 of Louis de la Vallée Poussin's "Réflexions Sur Le Madhyamaka", Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques, Deuxième Volume, 1932-1933, pp. 4-59.

sional recourse to words and names for the ineffable Absolute. On the other hand, an inquirer who has not transcended the boundaries of the standpoint of saṁvṛtisatya can only passively appropriate an upādāya prajñapti. On his terms, it is nothing more than prapañca that has the specific intention of serving as a predicate for the Absolute. This is to say, that śūnyatā, for example, can only become an upādāya prajñapti for that person once he has attained paramārthasatya.[1]

The third and final point that I wish to make concerning Nāgārjuna's general conceptualization of language involves again a return to a look at the problem of the relationship between śūnyatā and prapañca encountered in the discussion and establishment of our first point, namely, the difference between the two. Here however, we will attempt to see the implications of the higher understanding that if all dharmas are śūnyatā, prapañca itself must also be śūnyatā[2].

Can language function without being (svabhāva)? This is the crucial question. If one interprets the function of language to be the communication or conveying of meaning, that is, the communication of that which is to do with the true state of things concerned, and if one interprets being in this context, as the reality inherent in the true state of things concerned

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1 Neither Nāgārjuna nor Candrakīrti bother to sufficiently explain the concept of upādāya prajñapti, these are therefore, my own speculations.

2 This results in the supreme equation of Nirvāṇa with saṁsāra: na saṁsārasya nirvāṇātkiṁcidasti viśeṣaṇam.... (MMK. XXV. 19-20).

(that which is revealed by language) as well as the reality inherent in language itself[1], then the answer to our question must be "no". This is further borne out by the seemingly complete dependence of language, in both a grammatical and logical sense, upon the copula "is" in order to accomplish the dynamics[2] of meaning which follow from the synthesis of subject and predicate, and which make communication possible.[3]

Nāgārjuna, I think, would not disagree with these things, since what is essentially being said is that language must be of the same order of reality as those things which it reveals, and in terms of saṃvṛtisatya this is certainly the case, for here language has a pragmatic, though provisional, validity. However, this is the limit of the function (validity) of language, for in raising language up to the level of paramārthasatya by equating it with śūnyatā, Nāgārjuna also robs it of the copula "is" and as a result language collapses back in upon itself. In slightly different words, Nāgārjuna would accept the proposition that language cannot function (reveal) without being, (svabhāva), but he would simultaneously counter this with the submission that no such thing as being (svabhāva) ultimately exists. What follows from this, is

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1 That is to say, if language were not in itself real, then how would it be capable of revealing anything at all which is real?

2 Without the copula "is", and the ensuing possibility of predication, one would simply be left with a succession of isolated and static particulars and universals.

3 For a brief discussion of the inherent contradiction of predication see p. 28 of A. K. Chatterjee's "The Mādhyamika and the Philosophy of Language", in the same author's Facets of Buddhist Thought, Sanskrit College Calcutta, 1975, pp. 21-31.

that language does not function, that is, it does not reveal, in terms of Ultimate Truth (paramārthasatya). On the contrary, as we have learned above (p. 140), one of the chief and defining functions of language (saṃvṛti) in relation to paramārtha is that of a concealment (varaṇa) which gives rise to ajñāna.

Thus the last point that I make here, in terms of Nāgārjuna's general metaphysical concern with language is that, as śūnyatā, it is ultimately possessed of an intrinsic self-collapsability as opposed to an intrinsic reality (svabhāva), and this is not different for any so called 'real' that one might attempt to insert into Nāgārjuna's system. Out of the fact that all given or relative reality (pratītyasamutpāda) is śūnyatā[1], language (prapañca) itself has no foothold (other than the illusory and provisional foothold of givenness) in being, and it must inevitably, once the ruse of its existence is pointed out and properly apprehended, collapse in upon itself without the concession of any ontic residue whatsoever.

In summation, I might say, that what I have tried to establish in this first segment of the present chapter, has been what I feel are the three essential points concerning a general philosophy of language in Nāgārjuna as it stands in relation to his thought as a metaphysical response, that is a response in pursuit of a final reality, to the given experience of existence. This response might better be called a hermeneutic of existence,

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1 Again as at MMK. XXIV. 18: yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe/.

or in other words, an effort to understand the final real through an extended exegesis of given existence. The three points are as follows: a) that language (prapañca) is fundamentally opposed to that which is real (śūnyatā) — this is a conclusion couched in saṁvṛtisatya; b) that language (prapañca) can justifiably be employed as metaphorical instruction (upādāya prajñapti) by one who does so from the point of view of paramārthasatya, but only provisionally — in effect working as a bridge between saṁvṛtisatya and paramārthasatya; c) that prapañca is śūnyatā — this is the final conclusion, the conclusion from the standpoint of paramārthasatya[1]. In the light of this last conclusion, the complex called 'language' in all of its manifestations, along with all of its essential presuppositions such as grammatical laws, the relation between name and thing (word and object), the assumption of the reality of a speaker (an author of a statement) and a hearer (one who understands a statement)[1] as well as the assumption of the reality of the language employed, etc., simply dissipates. Even an upādāya prajñapti does not violate this principle, for an upādāya prajñapti as restructured[3] language also becomes non-language (niṣprapañca), that is, śūnyatā-talk, meaning not talk about śūnyatā but talk which is śūnyatā itself.

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1 One could also justify considering "b)" after "c)", since an upādāya prajñapti can employed only after attaining paramārthasatya, however the order given is presented in terms of the becoming of a person within saṁvṛti who must passively encounter an upādāya prajñapti, such as śūnyatā, before understanding it in the highest sense.

2 This does not mean that the two could not be the same person.

3 See above p. 146 n. 3.

We may also conclude that here, just as in the Pāli literature consulted in the previous chapter, language as _prapañca_ has to be looked upon as a genuinely negative concept. In order to illustrate this, let us consider each of the three points made about Nāgārjuna's theory of language in its metaphysical aspect. First of all, the incompatability of _prapañca_ and _śūnyatā_ produces a two-fold, compounded negativity, for such a stark bifurcation results on the one hand in the complete ineffability of the Absolute, and on the other in the fact that what is not the Absolute (_i.e._, _prapañca_) necessarilly becomes soteriologically detrimental, that is, it works against one's becoming. Secondly, one must note that although an _upādāya prajñapti_ can be looked upon as a provisional restoration of language by the illumination of _paramārthasatya_, it is in fact, just that, inherently provisional and can in no way be regarded as a predicate of the Absolute, much less a definition of it. Lastly, the ultimate equation of _prapañca_ with _śūnyatā_ adds no positive connotation to the concept of language, for in order to become the Absolute, _prapañca_ has to completely give up that fundamental nature (_svabhāva_) which stands in opposition to _śūnyatā_, and therefore it would no longer be language (_prapañca_), but in fact, its antithesis, or, that which is _nisprapañca_. This then, is Nāgārjuna's general philosophy of language in terms of his metaphysical response to given existence.

ii) Dialectic and Psuedo-Polemic

In the last segment we focussed our attention upon Nāgārjuna's ideas about language as they were set in what we have chosen to call his metaphysical response to existence, that is, in terms of his pursuit of the final state (which for him was *śūnyatā*) of things. Here we wish to shift our concern, but only slightly, to what we shall call Nāgārjuna's epistemological response to existence, that is, his consuming interest in the limits and form of our knowledge about things. The two, metaphysics and epistemology, are not isolated streams in Nāgārjuna's thought, for at every instance that he is concerned with the content (metaphysics) of given and final reality, he is also concerned with the form (epistemology) or the total possibilities of apprehending or coming to terms with that content.

This said, I think that we may also, within this segment, complete our analysis of *MMK*. XXIV. 18, since we still have one concept which is there mentioned, namely, *madhyamā pratipad*[1],

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1 The phrase only occurs at this place in *MMK*. and once at the close of Nāgārjuna's commentary to *VV*. 70 in a statement that praises the teaching of the Buddha. The phrase does not appear in *NS*., *PS*., *MV*., or *R*.. M. P. V. Bhattacharya, in the first paragraph of his "Catuṣkoti", *JCV*., pp. 85-91 states:

> In Buddhism there are two middle paths (*majjhimā pratipadā-madhyamā pratipad*) and both of them are expounded by the Blessed One himself. The first of them is the Noble Eightfold Way (*Ārya aṣṭāṅgika mārga*) which avoids the two *antas* or *koṭis*, extremities of attachment to worldly enjoyments and to extreme self-mortification. And the second is the one that avoids the opposite views, such as *asti*, *nāsti*; *nitya*, *anitya*; *ātman*, *anātman*, *sukha*, *duḥkha*; *śūnya*, *aśūnya*; *etc*.

In this segment we will be concerning ourselves chiefly with the latter. See also note 840(6) in J. May, *Candrakīrti....*

left to be considered. In fact the concept of *madhyamā pratipad* fundamentally describes and explains the essence of Nāgārjuna's dialectic and also his subsequent polemical employment of that dialectic.

Our best beginning therefore, is an examination of the following explanation by Candrakīrti[1] of this concept of *madhyamā pratipad*:

> *saiva svabhāvānutpattilaksanā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipaditi vyavasthāpyate. yasya hi svabhāvenānutpattih, tasya astitvābhāvah, svabhāvena cānutpannasya vigamābhāvānnāstitvābhāva iti. ato bhāvābhāvāntadvayarahitatvāt sarvasvabhāvānutpattilaksanā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipat, madhyamo mārga ityucyate.* (It is just that which is characterised by the non-origination of *svabhāva* which is *śūnyatā*, it is given the name *madhyamā pratipad*. For that which is not possessed of origination in terms of *svabhāva* [also] lacks reality [*astitva*], but on account of the absence of the cessation of that which has its origination in terms of *svabhāva* it thus does not lack reality. Therefore, because of the avoidence of the two extremes of being and non-being [in the concept of] *śūnyatā*, as it is characterised as the non-origination in terms of *svabhāva* of all things, it [*śūnyatā*] is *madhyamā pratipad*, it is called the middle way.)

Here *śūnyatā* itself is *madhyamā pratipad* because it does not fall prey to the logical and ontological extremities of being and non-being (*bhavābhavānta*), for as indicated in the second sentence of the above quotation, one can easily make the mistake of apprehending *śūnyatā* by means of either of these dogmas.[2] In this way, Nāgārjuna seeks to resolve the given relativity of any polar op-

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1 *Pr.* 220.1-4. See also *MMK.* XV. 7 where Nāgārjuna alludes to the Kaccāyanasutta (*SN.* II. 17)and Candrakīrti on this.

2 *Cf.* *MMK.* V. 8.

position, not by the common Western practice of relying on a simple law of the excluded middle[1], but by allowing the dialectical[2] tension between the two polarities to produce and give way to a position[3] which in no way commits itself to, or depends on, anything less than a comprehensive or holistic apprehension of the inter-relatedness and mutual dependence of both of the original opposite points. The metaphysical correlate of this madhyamā pratipad is, of course, pratītyasamutpāda = śūnyatā.

It must be noted that Nāgārjuna's consistent recourse to madhyamā pratipad has for its soteriological setting that same unmitigated concern with the arrest and subsequent dissipation of all conceptual extension (prapañca), especially in the form of views (dṛṣṭayaḥ), that we encountered in our examination of the Pāli suttas in the previous chapter. Thus we find at MMK. XIII. 8, that even the concept of śūnyatā, which has the final aim of logically trumping the assumed validity of all possible metphysical viewpoints, runs the danger of itself becoming of the same order as that which it attempts to undermine:

> śūnyatā sarvadṛṣṭīnāṁ proktā niḥsaraṇaṁ jinaiḥ/
> yeṣāṁ tu śūnyatā dṛṣṭistānasādhyān babhāṣire//
> (It has been declared by the Conquerors, [i.e., the Buddhas] that śūnyatā is the abandonment of all views/

1 For a brief but thoughtful discussion of the respective treatment of polar opposition in the classical East and West see Betty Heimann's "Opposites: Contrasts or Complements in Early Greek and Indian Philosophy", ALB. #25, 1961, pp. 216-228.

2 In Nāgārjuna this is more than a simple Hegelian synthesis since a new position is not produced.

3 That, as I hope show further on below, is not really a position.

> However, they have [also] said that those who [hold] the drsti of śūnyatā are incurable//)

One can therefore see that when one applies the attitude of madhyamā pratipad to the possibility of regarding a state of affairs in either one way or in its opposite, one must not look upon the product itself as a new viewpoint.[1]

Madhyamā pratipad, as the transcendence of the dve ante that comprise polar opposition, is for Nāgārjuna, the archtypical dialectical force, and by means of its appropriate logical extrapolation one obtains that which has come to be accepted as Nāgārjuna's polemical banner, namely, catuskoti[2]. When one speaks of Nāgārjuna's dialectic, one is usually referring to this catuskoti. As one can see from the previous chapter it was not invented by Nāgārjuna but already existed in the form of the avyākatāni in the Pāli suttas[3] Nāgārjuna only placed the spotlight on it, as well as a few other key notions such as śūnyatā, pratītyasamutpāda, madhyamā pratipad, etc.[4], in order to formulate a coherent and integral system of thought.

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1 Words such as upādana and grāha with the detrimental sense of grasping or holding seem common in MMK., for example see MMK. VIII. 13; XV. 10; XVI. 9; etc., illustrating that clinging to views is definitely not desirable.

2 Literally the word means "four limits", and does not appear to occur in MMK. or VV., however the fourfold dialectic is clearly visible in such places as MMK. XXII. 11 and XXV. 17. See also M. P. V. Bhattacharya's "Catuskoti".

3 The chief instance is, of course, the avyākata concerning the Tathāgata. See also Luis O Gomez, "Proto-Mādhyamika...", and N. Dutt, "Brahmajālasutta...".

4 In fact the origination of the characteristic stance seems to be attributed to Sañjaya at D. I. p. 58.

Basically, catuskoti appears in Nāgārjuna in the following manner (MMK. XXII. 11):

> śūnyamiti na vaktavyamaśūnyamiti va bhavet/
> ubhayaṁ nobhayaṁ ceti prajñaptyarthaṁ tu kathyate//
> (It should not be [the case] that śūnyam or aśūnyam are to be asserted/
> As also both and neither of them, however they are stated for the sake of instruction//).

We may represent the above more schematically in this way:

> a) affirmation (śūnya)
> b) negation (aśūnya)
> c) affirmation and negation (śūnyaśūnya)
> d) neither affirmation nor negation (na śūnyaśūnya).

Thus, for Nāgārjuna any proposition (pratijñā) can be accounted for and eventually shown to be self-contradictory and defective by its simple rotation through the four symmetrical limits of catuskoti. In the light of this, the fundamental purpose of catuskoti can be seen to be twofold, it first of all, in its totality, represents the limit or the logical possibilities of holding any position, and secondly, in conjunction with the demonstration of the self-contradictory nature of each of its parts, it points to the dissipation of all viewpoints or propositions.

The question now remains as to how Nāgārjuna manages to demonstrate the self-contradictory nature of given propositions?[1]

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1 One can consult the following secondary material specifically on the problem of Nāgārjuna's dialectic and its application: R. C. Pandeya's "The Logic of Catuṣkoṭi and Indescribability", VB., pp. 25-40; Chapters V, VI, and VII of T. R. V. Murti's Central Philosophy...; R. K. Tripathi's "The Mādhyamika Theory of Dialectic", in Recent Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, ed., K. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 229-239; R. H. Robinson's Early Madhyamika..., pp. 50-58; F. J. Streng's "Metaphysics, Negative Dialectic, and the Expression of the Inexpressible", in PEW. Vol. XXV., #4, Oct., 1975, pp. 430-447.

In order to answer this question one must recall that, for Nāgārjuna, propositions cannot have a truth value realtion to facts or objects given in experience since these facts or objects are not ontological reals (i.e., possessed of svabhāva), on the contrary, propositions belong to the realm of mental fabrication (prapañca). The touchstone with which Nāgārjuna tests propositions is not a correspondence to external fact[1], but whether or not the propo-

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1 Again, this does not mean that Nāgārjuna did not respond at all to the pragmatic actuality of given experience, for in fact, the hallmark of Buddhist epistemology, Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, has been to give complete presidence to a rationality which appeals to pragmatic experience, as opposed to the characteristic reliance of the Brahmanical schools upon revelation (śruti). See above, p. 94 n. 1, as well as K. N. Jayatillekè's "The Buddhist Attitude to Revelation", The Wheel (Buddhist Publication Society # 163) Kandy, Ceylon, Vol. IX, pp. 33-46, and T. W. Organ's, "Reason and Experience in Mahayana Buddhism", Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. XX, #2, 1952, pp. 77-83. Apart from this, one can, I think, perceive, in the devastatingly negative force of Nāgārjuna's dialectic (catuskoti) coupled with this statement of a denial of external material referends for words, the germ for the later Buddhist theory of meaning associated with Yogācāra logicians such as Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, and Ratnakīrti, namely, the theory of apoha (lit. denying). In short, this theory holds that the whole problem of meaning is an intellectual one, that is to say, words do not refer to particulars outside of the conceptual sphere and that the particular conceptual instance (svalaksana) that stands as a word's 'meaning' is obtained by the dialectical interaction of the givenness of the word with its intrinsic repudiation of all other meanings (i.e., its non-givenness). Th. Stcherbatsky provides us with an example in his Buddhist Logic, Vol. I, New York, 1962, p. 460:

> The word "white" does not communicate the cognition of all white objects. They are infinite and no one knows them all. Neither does it communicate cognition of a Universal Form of "whiteness" as an external Ens cognized by the senses. But it refers to a line of demarcation between the white and the non-white, which is cognized in every individual case of the white. The white is cognized through the non-white, and the non-white through the white.

Thus, while doing away with the need for a universal which re-

sition itself along with its logical implications stands free from internal and external contradictions[1]. In other words, the proposition itself must first of all be a well made proposition, i.e., one that is not non-sensical, and secondly it must be faultlessly consistent with its implications, in order to be an acceptable proposition for Nāgārjuna.

Of the two points just mentioned in the last sentence, the first attempts to get rid of statements that deal with empty or unreal concepts, and which have their paradigms in phrases such as "the son of a barren woman", etc.. Its functioning does not essentially recquire a dialectic, but a straightforward analytic process which Nāgārjuna can perform completely from the standpoint of saṁvṛtisatya. On the other hand, the second point necessarily implies an analysis of propositions in terms of paramārthasatya and in order to perform its function must draw upon the dialectical process. It is in terms of this latter point, that we may justifiably assert that we are encoutering the fun-

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sides as an actuality in each particular (as for example we might encounter in the Nyāya concept of jāti or generic property), the theory of apoha is able to provide a meaning for every concept even though, it must be noted, that this meaning is necessarily an indirect or dialectical one. For secondary materials on the theory of apoha see Th. Stcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic, Vol. I, pp. 457-482 (this also contains translations of some pertinent primary material), Vol. II pp. 403-418 (for the most part containing a translation of Vācaspatimisra's summation of the theory); R. C. Pandeya, The Problem of Meaning in Indian Philosophy, Delhi, 1963, pp. 200ff.; D. Sharma, The Negative Dialectics, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1974, Chapt. V, as well as the same author's "Buddhist Theory of Meaning (Apoha) and Negative Statements", PEW, XVIII, 1968, pp. 3-10; S. S. Barlingay, "The Significance of Pratītya Samutpāda, Sāmānyalakṣana and Apoha in Buddhism", IPC. (45th. Session), Hyderabad, 1971, pp. 140-157.

1 See R. C. Pandeya, "The Logic...", pp. 26-27.

damentals of a Philosophy of Language in Nāgārjuna.

In any event, let us cite a brief example of Nāgārjuna's demonstration of the implicit contradiction of a given proposition. He states at MMK. I. 8[1]:

> naivāsato naiva sataḥ pratyayo 'rthasya yujyate/
> asataḥ pratyayaḥ kasya sataśca pratyayena kim//
> (The conditional cause for an object which is either existent or non-existent does not follow/ [If] there is a conditional cause of a non-existent [object], [then] to what [does it belong]? And [if it] is existent, [then] how can this be [because of the conditional cause?//)

Here Nāgārjuna is concerned with the proposition that there is such a thing as a conditional cause (pratyaya[2]) which gives rise to an object. In order to illustrate the contradictory nature of such an assumption, Nāgārjuna injects it into a polar dilemna, with a specific effort to initially delimit its logical possibilities. Thus, we may break down the first line of the above kārikā into the following paraphrase which may be taken as its broader or underlying sense: a) it is reasonable to assume that if a conditional cause which gives rise to an object is a proper assumption, then it should hold true for either the case of that object which is produced being existent, or its being non-existent; b) if one of these cases proves to be inconsistent, then we are compelled, by the force of logic (i.e., the law of contradiction[3]) to accept the alternative as the true case, since what

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1 This appears in most translations as MMK. I. 6, but Vaidya counts the openning dedication to the Buddha, along with the enumeration of the eight negations, as MMK. I. 1-2.

2 See Stcherbatsky, The Conception..., p. 164 n. 6.

3 R. C. Pandeya in his "The Logic...", rightly sets up the distinction in Nāgārjuna between the law of the excluded middle and the law of contradiction.

is in fact the truth in any state of affairs has to be defined in terms of its static relationship to what is not the truth in that same state of affairs[1]; c) I, Nāgārjuna, submit that the concept of conditional cause is inconsistent in both the case of its giving rise to an existent object, as well as, its giving rise to a non-existent object. The second line simply presents the reasons for the inconsistency of each of the alternatives, and may be paraphrased as follows: a) if the object which is produced by the pratyaya is non-existent, then we have no thing to speak of as being produced by the pratyaya and that object cannot be spoken of as having a pratyaya[2]; b) if the object which is produced by the pratyaya is existent, then we have an object which is a perfectly completed thing, and can thus stand on its own without any relation to a pratyaya whatsoever[3].

Where, then, does this leave the holder of the original proposition asserting pratyaya? What seems to have happened is that the law of contradiction[4], which had formerly served as the proponent's static measure of truth over falsity, can now produce only an inconclusive oscillation grounded in relativity. The carpet has been pulled from under his feet, and he must either

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1 In this sense a polar opposition presents us with the least complex map of the possibility of the truth of any given state of affairs.

2 Candrakīrti reads (Pr. 28.14): asato hyarthasya avidyamānasya kathaṁ pratyayaḥ syāt?

3 Pr. 28.18 : sato 'pi vidyamānasya labdhajanmano niṣphalaiva pratyayakalpanā.

4 That is, if one asserts a proposition as true, one cannot simultaneously assert its contradicory proposition as true.

accept the contradictory nature of his proposition, or seek to fit the elucidation of his proposition into alternatives other than those involved in basic polar opposition, which in any event are already accounted for by the last two components of Nāgārjuna's catuṣkoṭi[1].

In this way, all propositions are shown by the Mādhyamika to entail inconsistency in their implications and thus do not merit being entertained by them. How then, does Nāgārjuna himself escape this rather ominous pitfall? The answer to this, of course, lies in that concept which serves as the fundamental impulse to the whole Mādhyamika dialectic, namely, madhyamā pratipad, for here a commitment to one of the polar alternatives does not present the final solution in obtaining the truth concerned, in fact, commitment is expressly avoided, for to do so would breed the exact opposite of what is aimed for and thus only further compound the given problem (i.e., add to prapañca). One strives for the middle, the whole dialectic is a striving for the middle, and it is in this way alone that the absolute consistency recquired to produce a path out of the falsity of illusion is maintained.

We can see therefore, that Nāgārjuna was in possession of a devastatingly critical weapon which, in terms of polemics, put to question not only the systematic conclusions concerning the nature of reality arrived at by his contemporary philosophi-

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1 However the actual mechanics of this dialectic in the more complex points of catuskoti present a difficult problem. Nāgārjuna seems to restrict his explicit employment of the dialectic to the relationship between the first two kotis.

cal counterparts, but also, and more importantly, put to question the very concept of truth upon which these systems were constructed. Yet, the most important thing to be recognised in terms of Nāgārjuna's polemics is that he carries on his critical assaults on other schools without ever commiting himself to a position (pratijñā) in opposition to them.[1] His only standpoint for the employment of the dialectic is paramārthasatya, which cannot be in any sense looked upon as a counterposition, for paramārthasatya is by definition the recognition that all standpoints or positions are śūnyatā (the nature of emptiness).

It is in this sense that we encounter the well known statements of VV. 29[2]:

> yadi kācana pratijñā syānme tata eṣa me bhaveddoṣaḥ/
> nāsti ca mama pratijñā tasmānnaivāsti me doṣaḥ//
> (If there were any proposition [made] by me, then there might be this error [belonging] to me/
> But there is no proposition which is mine, therefore there is no error [which belongs] to me//)

But then again, one might ask how it is at all possible for Nāgārjuna to negate the validity (i.e., demonstrate the śūnyatā) of his opponent's statements by means of his own statements which are śūnyatā (and therefore not propositions)? In other words, how can one establish śūnyatā by means of that which is already

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1 This premise became the distinctive mark of the Prāsaṅgika school of Mādhyamika headed by Buddhapālita which stood in opposition to definitive Svātantrika Mādhyamika premise that one must commit oneself to a position in order to refute an opponents position, propounded for example by Bhāviveka. See Murti, The Central Philosophy..., pp. 87-103.

2 Cf., R. I. 60; II. 5; also VV. XXIV and commentary.

śūnyatā[1] ? Nāgārjuna explains this exact point in VV. 23 and its commentary; the commentary, which is the more explicit of the two runs as follows:

> yathā nirmitakah puruso 'nyam nirmitakam purusam kasmimścidarthe vartamānam pratisedhayet, māyākārena vā srsto māyāpuruso 'nyam māyāpurusam svamāyayā srstām kasmimścidarthe vartamānam pratisedhayet, tatra yo nirmitakah purusah pratisidhyāte so 'pi śūnyah/ yah pratisedhayāti so 'pi śūnyah/ yo māyāpurusāh pratisidhyate so 'pi śūnyah/ yah pratisedhayāti so 'pi śūnyah/ evameva madvacanena śūnyenāpi sarvabhāvānām svabhāvapratisedha upapannah/ (Just as an artificially created person may negate [or oppose] another artificially created person who is existing because of something, or [just as] a phanthom person created by a conjurer may negate [or oppose] another phanthom person created by his own power of illusion who is existing because of something, there the artificially created person who is negated [or opposed], even he is empty/ He who negates, even he is empty/ The phanthom person who is negated, even he is empty/ He who negates [that one] even he is empty/ Only thus, is the negation of the svabhāva of all entities by my statement, even though it is empty, possible/)

Here, the imagery of the illusory beings serves to call atten- to the fact that, according to Nāgārjuna, the statements of his opponent are already empty and that he is not as much negating them as, negating the illusory assumption that they are not empty. The whole process of negation, for Nāgārjuna, takes place on a level based on the illusion or ignorance (ajñāna) that propositions are possessed of a svabhāva (own reality), or in other words, on the level of samvrti, and it is an empty process. Though Nāgār- statements are empty, this in no way prevents them from carrying

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1 In such sentences, as in the quotation from VV. 23 that follows one usually finds the word śūnya used instead of the abstract śūnyatā, however in the light of the famous monistic (advaya) Mādhyamika identification of Nirvāna with samsāra, I do not think that the latter is inappropriate.

their function within this sphere of saṁvṛti, and this function is to negate, or demonstrate the empty nature of all statements. This point is specifically adressed in Nāgārjuna's commentary to VV. XXII:

> yathā ca pratītyasamutpannatvāt svabhāvaśūnyā api rathapaṭaghaṭādayaḥ sveṣu sveṣu kāryeṣu kāṣṭhatṛṇamṛttikāharaṇe madhūdakapayasāṁ dhāraṇe śītavātātapaparitrāṇaprabhṛtiṣu vartante, evamidaṁ madīyavacanaṁ pratītyasamutpannatvān niḥsvabhāvamapi niḥsvabhāvatvaprasādhane bhāvānāṁ vartate/ (Just as a cart, a garment, a pot, etc., which are empty of svabhāva on account of having been dependently originated, exist in their respective functions of carrying wood, grass, and earth, of containing honey, water, and curds, of offering protection from cold, wind, and heat, just so my own statement, which is also without svabhāva on account of having been dependently originated, exists in the sense of effecting the no-own-beingness of things/)

We can conclude that Nāgārjuna's dialectic in its epistemic, and especially its polemical sense, is an operation or technique performed, and thus effectual, wholly within the sphere of saṁvṛti alone, although what we might call its base of operations is necessarily paramārthasatya. The aim of the dialectic is not to produce a new position and it nowhere along the line assumes any counterposition; the dialectic is epistemically and logically only pure criticism[1].

Before closing the chapter, we may summarize the essential points made in this segment concerning Nāgārjuna's concept

1 The doctrine of madhyamā pratipad is, of course, soteriologically much more than this, and in these terms, we must wholeheartedly agree with T. R. V. Murti's statement on p. 212 of his Central Philosophy...: "The dialectic is not an avenue for the acquisition of information, but a catharsis....".

of language in terms of his dialectic and polemics[1]. Thus the first recognition that Nāgārjuna makes in this respect is that language in its daily application, in fact in its broadest sense as the complete expanse of human conceptualization (prapañca), is inconsistent and self-contradictory. Out of the fact that it is a multiple and differentiated complex, it is not fitted for the task which is most often assumed of it, namely, furthering the apprehension of non-relative truth. In other words, language is differentiated, and the basic unit of differentiation is intrinsic polarity (i.e., the concept of difference is founded upon the polarity of "is" and "is not"), this coupled with the law of contradiction can only result in relative truths, just as the concept of truth itself is intelligible only in terms of its relation to the concept of falsity. The metaphysics of Śūnyatā, in its non-duality, is not compatible with such a process of truth determination, i.e., with such an epistemology, so that language (prapañca) taken in the above sense, is not only incapable of establishing non-relative truth, but in its attempts to do so, it works in diametrical opposition to this exact end. Nāgārjuna's solution to this, is the most fundamental Buddhist solution to possibility, namely, the concept of dialectical tension or madhyamā pratipad.

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1 We must again make it clear that Nāgārjuna never involves himself in what would be called genuine polemics, as made up of arguments based upon assertions and counter-assertions, for Nāgārjuna can never take up a position of his own without being to the inconsitency that he himslef criticizes. His is only a psuedo-polemic since its purpose is to undermine all positions (assertions).

Secondly, one must consider the two-fold comment on language implicitly contained in Nāgārjuna's formulation of catuṣkoṭi. Passively it stands as a schematic representation of the logical limits or possibilities of language, in other words, we encounter in catuṣkoṭi the very form of language, and it does not have anything to do with reality (śūnyatā) which is altogether other than form (and for that matter, non-form). Actively, that is, in terms of the dialectical impulse of madhyamā pratipad, by means of which one is able to rotate a given concept through its corresponding counterpositions, one demonstrates the contradictory nature of language along with its self collapsability (svabhāvaśūnyatva). Catuṣkoṭi again, is a map of the fact that language (prapañca) is totally different from, and opposed to, that realisation (prajñā) which is śūnyatā.

Lastly, in order to remain consistent, Nāgārjuna must admit that his own statements are, in the perspective of saṃvṛtisatya (i.e., in the perspective of his opponents), no better off than the ones which he himself is attempting to expose as empty (śūnya). However, since Nāgārjuna employs language only with the awareness (prajñā) that it is empty (śūnya) and dependently originated (pratītyasamutpanna), he does not become attached to the views (dṛṣṭayaḥ) he may use to dialectically counter his opponent, and thus in an ultimate sense (paramārthasatya) he does not speak at all, and is niṣprapañca. There is no concession here, for language is still a completely negative concept

and not redeemable, except by the very fact that it has to become exactly what it is not, that is, *niṣprapañca*. Language, for Nāgārjuna, is not redeemable as language, since everything that it essentially entails must necessarily be transcended.

In terms of this chapter as a whole, we have attempted to present a study of Nāgārjuna's thought specifically in relation to its bearing upon his concept of language. We have done this in a double context. First of all, in the context of discussing Nāgārjuna's thought as a metaphysical response to given existence, and secondly, as an epistemological (dialectical/polemical) response to given existence. The two, of course, cannot be strictly separated, but such a division does provide us with the skeleton of a methodological entrance into Nāgārjuna. According to the metaphysical response, language (*prapañca*) is a decidedly negative concept in terms of its relation to the Absolute (*śūnyatā*) because it is completely different from the Absolute and therefore, cannot in any proper way touch, much less contain, that Absolute. Even in its identification with *śūnyatā*, *prapañca* must give up its own-existence (*svabhāva*) as *prapañca*. Similarly, in reference to the epistemological response, language is totally other than the Absolute, and in fact, works against the realisation of *śūnyatā* as final reality, so that in order for such a realisation of *śūnyatā* to take place, language must be completely undermined and abandoned as language—it must become *niṣprapañca*. Thus, language (*prapañca*), as Nāgārjuna envisions it, is precisely something 'diabolical'.

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Epilogue B

The last two chapters of this thesis have produced descriptions of language that, I think, can best be described as "diabolical". In this "Epilogue", as in the one adjoined to the first two chapters, I find it necessary to make a few brief comments on the similarities and differences in each respective and general description of language as "diabolical".

First of all, we can say that language as described in both the Pāli suttas and in Nāgārjuna's thought can be called "diabolical" for the same basic reason, namely, that it (language, or p(r)apañca) is fundamentally cut off from the Absolute (nibbāna, śūnyatā). In the Pāli suttas this is brought out by the inability of papañca to grasp the nature of the Absolute, while in Nāgārjuna this same thing is more sophisticatedly expressed in the doctrine of two truths (dve satye). In addition to this, in both chapters, p(r)pañca is not only that which is cut off from the Absolute, but, and more importantly so, it is that which at every turn, works against the attainment of the realisation (paññā, prajñā) which sees through to the Absolute. In terms of the above points there is no radical change whatsoever between the conceptualization of language as "diabolical" in the Pāli suttas and the conceptualization of language as "diabolical" in Nāgārjuna.

If one attempts to understand the transformations involved in the development of a tradition such as Indian Buddhism, one must, I think, recognize that each stage of its development (in the broadest sense, for example, take the distinction of Hinayāna/Mahāyāna) does not come about as a result of a break with the former tradition as much as it results from the basic and continuous inner dynamism that allows the essence of its original and founding truth to encounter and come to terms with the total phenomenon of human consciousness. Therefore, in marking out difference in the respective conceptualizations of language as "diabolical", we must again keep in mind that we are dealing with one of degree rather than kind. In this respect, one may make a case for the fact that papañca in the Pāli suttas is couched in pluralistic realism (since we are dealing with a Sthaviravādin recension[1]), while prapañca in Nāgārjuna is set in the transcendental Void of Śūnyatā. However, as far as I can see, this in no way affects their respective views about p(r)apañca as that which is different from and opposed to the attainment of that which is sought after in both contexts, or in other words as, "diabolical".

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1 Cf., A. K. Warder, Indian Buddhism, Delhi, 1970, pp. 7f. and p. 296.

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